

Architectural & Restoration Review Board

Ashtabula Harbor Historical District

Guide for the Preservation, Alteration, Restoration, and New Construction of Buildings within the District

Duties and Powers of the Review Board Established Ord.1137.

(a) The Architectural and Restoration Review Board established by Chapter [167](#) of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Ashtabula shall prepare a comprehensive plan for the Harbor Historic District so that any new construction, preservation, restoration, reconstruction and rehabilitation of homes, commercial establishments or other structures shall conform to the epochal period of 1885 to 1925.

(b) The Board shall have the sole responsibility for permitting by approval of application of any property owner within the District, construction, preservation, restoration, reconstruction or rehabilitation of any home, commercial establishment or other structure within such District

(c) Subject to the review of the City Planning Commission, the Board shall have the exclusive power in determining to permit the razing or demolition of any structure within the District, unless such demolition is specifically ordered by the appropriate State or local fire, health or building officials by reason of imminent threat to the public health or safety.

(d) The Board shall determine the appropriateness of applications regarding construction, preservation, restoration, reconstruction and rehabilitation of structures and changes to any landscaping within the District in accord with the following standards set forth by the National Trust for Historic Preservation:

- (1) General design and arrangement;
- (2) Texture, material and color;
- (3) Exterior architectural features, including signs subject to public view from a public street, way or place;
- (4) Extent to which the building, structure or landscaping would be harmonious with or incongruous to the old and historic aspect of the surroundings of the District;
- (5) Extent to which such preservation, restoration, reconstruction and rehabilitation shall promote the general welfare by maintaining and increasing real estate values, generating business, creating new positions, attracting tourists, students, writers, historians, artists and artisans, attracting new residents and making the City a more attractive and desirable place in which to live.

(e) The Board shall have the power, upon approval of the Planning Commission and through City Council, to acquire by eminent domain, or otherwise, easements, or any other interest, in real property and the buildings thereon, or any part thereof, for the purpose of securing conformity of any real property and the buildings thereon, or any part thereof, in the District to the epochal period 1885 to 1925.

(f) In addition to the powers and duties hereinbefore specifically enumerated, the Board shall have all powers now or hereafter conferred upon the Board as are now or may hereafter be granted by Charter or by ordinance of the City, or any plan, or part of a plan made by the City Planning Commission, or any act or proceeding of the Planning Commission.
(Ord. 2009-06. Passed 1-20-09.)

Certificate of Appropriateness

Required No person shall undertake the construction, erection, alteration, removal, moving or demolition of any structure or building in the Ashtabula Harbor Historical District where such action will affect the exterior architectural features of structure or building, unless and until a Certificate of Appropriateness has been issued by the Architectural Review Board.

Informal Review A project may receive an informal review prior to submitting a formal Application for Review. The purpose of such an informal review shall be to enable the owner and/or his architect, contractor, or other representative to discuss the project with the Review Board, review design standards as they apply to the project and encourage the design process. The results of such informal reviews shall not be binding upon the Review Board or the applicant. Requests for informal reviews can be made to the Review Board directly or by contacting the Ashtabula City Office of Planning and Community Development.

The Review Procedure The following steps should be followed to obtain Review Board approval and a city zoning permit within the Historical District.

1. Obtain an Application for Review for the Harbor Historical District on line at <http://cityofashtabula.com> or at the municipal building Office of Community Development.
2. Become familiar with the Design Standards. The Office of Community Development and the Architecture Review Board can answer questions and concerns. Early inquiry can save time and money.
3. Prepare a Review Package. The Review Package shall consist of the following:
 - a. Completed Application for Review
 - b. A photo of the existing building elevation if applicable
 - c. A photo showing existing building or site and adjacent buildings or landscape
 - d. A drawing to scale showing the proposed project
 - e. Plan for colors to be used with paint charts or paint samples (Benjamin Moore Historical Collection or equivalent)
 - f. Specifications for materials and/or material sample
 - g. Schematic drawing of proposed exterior lighting if applicable
 - h Other supporting information that may help review process

4. Bring the Review Package to the Office of Community Development. It will be reviewed by the Zoning Inspector for compliance with Ashtabula city Ordinances. The Review Package will then be referred to the Architectural & Restoration Review Board.
5. The Review Package must be received by the Office of Community Development a minimum of seven (7) days prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Architectural Review Board.
6. If the Review Package is not received at least seven days in advance, **CONSIDERATION OF THE APPLICATION MAY BE DEFERRED UNTIL THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE REVIEW BOARD.**
7. The Board will review the application at its meeting. It is desirable that the applicant attend the meeting to answer any questions that may be raised by the Board. Based on the material and information provided, the Review Board will review the proposal for compliance with the Design Standards for the Ashtabula Harbor Historical District.
8. After reviewing the application, the Board will take one of the following actions.
 - a. Application is approved as submitted
 - b. Application is approved with changes detailed
 - c. Application is continued to next meeting for further discussion to address unresolved concerns.
 - d. Application is denied
9. Upon receipt of a Certificate of Appropriateness, the applicant may apply for and receive a City Zoning Permit.

Appeals Denial by the Review Board may be appealed as all other zoning decisions are appealed according to the Charter and ordinances of the City of Ashtabula.

Conflict of Interest No person appointed to the Architectural Review Board shall participate in the review of, and /or give advice upon, any work in which he or she or his or her partner, professional associate or associates or family member has any direct or indirect interest.

Design Standards for Rehabilitation of Existing Structures

Secretary of the Interior The Architectural Review Board shall evaluate each project involving an existing building or structure with respect to compliance with the Standards for Rehabilitation established by the Secretary of the Interior.

Compatible Re-use Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide either a compatible use for a property consistent with the Ashtabula Harbor Historical District requiring minimal alteration of the building, structure, or site and its environment, or to use a property for its original intended purpose.

Preservation of Features The distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure or site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided whenever possible.

Alteration of window and door openings is prohibited.

Respect for Period Features All buildings, structures and sites shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.

Respect for Changes Over Time Changes which may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure, or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right and this significance shall be recognized and respected.

Sensitivity for Distinctive Features Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship, which characterize a building or site, shall be treated with sensitivity.

Repair of Deteriorated Architectural Features Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced wherever possible. In the event that replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features substantiated by historic, physical or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.

Surface Treatment Proper cleaning methods should be used on historic buildings. The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials shall not be undertaken.

Brick and masonry exterior surfaces should remain paint free unless they were painted in the past.

Painted surfaces should be kept in good repair. All paint colors need to be part of the approved color collection (Benjamin Moore Historical Colors) or an equivalent color of another brand.

Protection of Archaeological Resources Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve archeological resources affected by or adjacent to any project.

Compatible Contemporary Additions Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural materials and when such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property, neighborhood or environment.

New Additions Whenever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.

Design Standards for New Construction and Infill Commercial

Visual Context Design for new construction must respect the overall visual context of the streetscape. New construction within the Harbor Historic District must reinforce the historic character and patterns of the district in order to maintain and preserve the setting. Building height, width, mass and proportion effect the degree of compatibility between the old and the new. New construction should enhance the overall appearance of the District without overwhelming the original historic architecture.

Style New construction should incorporate traditional facade components that are consistent with the epochal period 1885 AD to 1925 AD. The proportion of openings, width and height of windows, doors, and entries should be visually compatible with existing Historic District storefronts.

While new storefronts need not copy existing buildings in the Historic District, it is appropriate to incorporate architectural detail that acknowledges the traditional examples of existing structures. A new structure can incorporate modern materials and respond to contemporary needs, but contemporary design should not be a dominant pattern. New design should be congruous in scale and proportion with existing architecture.

Front elevations should be designed to accommodate appropriate uses by providing primary entrances, large windows and internal display area, and suitable signage. A long, unbroken façade shall be divided by openings, setoffs, or decorative elements into smaller units to complement the streetscape.

Windows New storefronts should be as transparent as possible. Large display windows with bulkhead base and upper transom were the predominant style of the period. Storefront windows should be of clear glass. Tinted and stained glass may be acceptable as accents. Glass block storefront windows are not appropriate. Upper story and residential windows should have proportions, size, and spacing that reflect the patterns established by period buildings in the Historic District.

Roofline New construction should respect the traditional rooflines used along the streetscape. Commercial buildings typically have flat roofs embellished with cornices or parapets on the facade. A modern interpretation of this design feature may be incorporated.

Setback There is zero setback of all new commercial structures on Bridge Street and Lake Avenue.

Height New construction should not visually overpower existing buildings, particularly at the street level. The predominant cornice height in the Harbor Historic District range from one to three stories. New construction in that height range will be considered in the context of its location.

Materials The exterior materials should be compatible with the predominant materials, textures, and colors of the facades in the Harbor Historic District. Traditional materials for commercial buildings are wood, brick, and stone

Vehicle Access Onsite parking lots, garages, and delivery areas should be oriented to the rear of the site, preferably making use of alleys or side streets.

Mechanical/Utility Mechanical equipment and utility installations shall be evaluated for their effects on rooftop appearance, and front, rear, and sidewall openings.

Landscaping Site landscaping must look compatible with adjacent landscaping. This includes grass, trees, shrubs, and flowers. Special concern is given to parking lot and sidewalk areas to retain the continuity of landscape features. Walls and fences should be compatible in size and materials with adjacent structures and fit the character of the Historic District.