II. ADMINISTRATION OF THE DISTRICT

Obligations of Owners and Tenants

If a property owner or tenant wishes to modify a building, structure, or site located within the District, he or she must apply to the New Bedford Historical Commission for review before undertaking the work. Approval may consist of a Certificate of Appropriateness, a Certificate of Non-Applicability, or a Certificate of Hardship.

Changes Requiring Historical Commission Approval

Under the By-Laws of the New Bedford Historical Commission and Chapter 40C, the Commission has the authority to review the following in the District:

1. Changes of any kind to any exterior portion of a building that is visible from a public way. A public way is defined as any sidewalk, roadway, right of way, or body of water.

2. Terraces, walks, driveways, sidewalks, and similar structures, provided that any such structure is substantially at grade (street) level.

3. Walls and fences.

4. Storm doors and windows, screens, window air conditioners, lighting fixtures, antenna and similar appurtenances.

5. The color of paint.

6. The color of materials used on roofs.

7. All signs and banners.

8. Temporary structures or signs, and similar matters as the Commission may reasonably specify.

Meetings of the Commission

The New Bedford Historical Commission meets the first Wednesday of every month and the meetings are open to the public. Meetings that require the review of applications for Certificates of Appropriateness are Public Hearings, and are advertised and posted as such. Applicants or their representatives are encouraged to be present at the meeting at which their application is being heard. All meeting agendas are posted with the City Clerk's Office in City Hall two days prior to all meeting. Special meetings, which may also be Public Hearings, are called as needed.

Commission meetings may be cancelled due to lack of a voting quorum. Applications under consideration at such meetings will be given highest priority at the next Commission meeting.

The Application Process

The process of applying to the New Bedford Historical Commission for work within the District is a simple one. The first step is to consult with the staff of the Commission in order to find out which certificate is necessary. The staff is also available to provide technical and design assistance for projects in the District. The Commission is staffed by National Park Service personnel located at 33 William Street, New Bedford, MA 02740, and may be contacted at 508.996.4095 ext.11.

In order to allow required legal notice in the New Bedford Standard-Times, completed applications, application materials and fees must be submitted to the secretary of the Historical Commission 28 days before the Historical Commission meeting. The owner of the property or his/her representative must sign applications.

TIME FRAMES FOR APPLICATIONS

- 28 days prior to the date of the NBHC public hearing the completed application and all required attachments are submitted to the secretary.
- 14 days prior to the public hearing the secretary reviews jurisdiction and the public notice is mailed and the advertisement for the hearing is placed in the Standard Times.
- On the date of the public hearing the application is heard by the NBHC.
- Five business days after the public hearing approved applicants are awarded the appropriate certificates.

Application Materials for Commission Meetings

Additions, alterations and new construction

- Photographs clearly showing the structures to be affected.
- Samples of materials to be used such as:
  - paint chips and color swatches
  - brick and mortar samples
- Scaled architectural drawings (1/8" =1' minimum) and specifications showing design and methods of construction of proposed work. Drawings are to be submitted on a paper size no larger that 11" x 17".
- Historical photographs (if available) to aid in sympathetic design.

Signs

- Scaled drawings for proposed signs; 1/2" = 1' minimum.
- Photographs or elevations of building showing exact locations of proposed signs, scaled at 1/8" = 1', or photograph.
- Samples or specifications for materials, colors, etc. to be used.
- Sections through sign showing details such as moldings, posts, and edge conditions.
- Details and specifications for proposed brackets/hangers, colors, installation methods, light fixtures, etc.

After Completion of the Work

After completion of the approved work, an official from the New Bedford Historical Commission will visit the work site to verify compliance with Commission-approved plans.

Enforcement

Failure to apply for proper Commission approval for work in the Waterfront Historic District constitutes a violation of Chapter 40C of Massachusetts Law and will be punished to the extent of the law, which specifies fines of up to $500 per day for unapproved work.

Applicants who receive Historical Commission approval must follow plans as approved. Failure to follow approved plans may also delay or prevent the issuance of Building Permits or Certificates of Occupancy.