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TOWN OF PITTSFORD
Design Review & Historic Preservation Board Application Guidelines for Certificate of Appropriateness

General Information about the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board

The Design Review and Historic Preservation Board generally meets on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at 6:45 PM at the Pittsford Town Hall, 11 South Main Street, Pittsford, New York. The Board adopts a schedule of meetings each year, which is available upon request.

The Board is made up of seven (7) volunteer resident members and is supported by the staff of the Town's Planning and Zoning Department. The Town's website has more information about the Board, together with a schedule of meetings and minutes from prior meetings.

The Board is responsible for the following areas:

- Residential projects, including new home construction and remodeling of existing homes that involves exterior elements.
- Commercial projects, including new buildings and remodeling of existing buildings that involves exterior elements.
- Permanent signage projects.
- Landmark Designation of historic properties.
- Certificates of Appropriateness for modifications to designated landmarks that involve exterior elements and/or interior elements of buildings open to the public.

Procedures for Applications Requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness

The following is a general outline of the steps to be followed in preparing an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to be considered the Board:

1. The applicant (either the property owner or a designated agent) will submit a completed application to the Town's Planning and Zoning Department. The applicant should retain a copy of all items submitted.
2. Upon receipt of a completed application, Town staff will schedule the application for the Board's agenda. An application needs to be received at least thirty (30) days prior to the Board meeting during which it will be reviewed.
3. A Public Hearing is required by Town Code for all applications requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness. As a result, Town staff will place a formal Legal Notice indicating receipt of the application in one of the Town's official newspapers, typically the Brighton Pittsford Post. In addition to placing the Legal Notice in a newspaper, Town staff may also post a sign on the property, giving notice of the application, approximately ten (10) days prior to the Public Hearing.

4. The Board members will review the full application and may visit the property, prior to the hearing date, so as to be fully familiar with the property.
5. During the Public Hearing, the Board will give the applicant an opportunity to make a verbal presentation, if desired, to supplement the application materials. The Board will also ask any questions they may have of the applicant. Members of the public who attend the hearing will also be invited to make comments, if they wish.
6. Once the Board is satisfied that they have all the information they need to make a decision, the Public Hearing will be closed.
7. The Board will discuss the matter and make a written decision, in the form of a Resolution. Although this will typically occur immediately after the close of the Public Hearing, if the Board feels it needs time to consider the matter it may be held to the next meeting for a decision.
8. Once a decision is made and a Board Resolution completed in support of a Certificate of Appropriateness, the project review may advance through the Building Department for conformance with New York State Building Code and the issuance of a Building Permit.

Application Materials to be Submitted

The purpose of completing an application and submitting supporting materials is to provide the Board with a full understanding of what the project's proposed exterior alterations are to the designated structure, as well as how those changes will fit within the context of the historic structure and/or historic district. In the case of improvements planned at designated landmarks that are commercially open to the general public, the Board will also take into consideration the context the proposed improvements will have on those interior spaces open to the public.

In light of the above goal, the applicant is to submit the following materials, as appropriate:

- Application - Submit a completed application form, which should include concise but complete written statements describing the changes proposed to be made to the existing structure and parcel. Attach additional sheets as necessary.
- Parcel Map - Attach a map or site plan indicating the size of the parcel and the approximate location of all structures. This map is typically of the entire property, drawn to scale, showing the existing structures, proposed structures, building additions, property setbacks, and when project scope dictates site and grading improvements. This is often best accomplished by having a licensed land surveyor add this information to an Instrument Survey Map or have a civil engineer develop a site plan.
- Photographs - Attach photographs to the application, together with captions, illustrating all sides of the existing designated landmark and the area impacted by the proposed project.
- Architectural Elevations – Attach scaled architectural elevations, sketches, and /or perspective drawings of the structure's façades clearly delineating the proposed modifications to the structure.
- Architectural Plans – Attach scaled architectural plans or sketches of the structure's floor plans and project details identifying proposed trim elements and building materials.

- Other – The applicant should consider submitting any items that would assist the Board in understanding the scope of the proposed project and the impact to the existing structure and/or structures on the property, and adjoining community. This might include perspective drawings, photo simulations, color architectural renderings, materials sample boards, color palettes, site and landscape plans.

A copy of the application and all associated supporting documentation should be kept for your records. Please only submit copies of any original documents that are historic in nature as *all* application forms and supporting documentation will not be returned to the applicant. The Board does reserve the right to request additional information or material submissions at the time of the Public Hearing.

Town Code and Guidance Provisions

The Design Review and Historic Preservation Board is required to review each application for a Certificate of Appropriateness against the relevant provisions of the Town Code. In summary, the Board needs to determine if the proposed alterations to the designated landmark will be:

- Minimized to preserve the historic features of the designated landmark.
- Compatible with the historic character and architectural style of the designated landmark.
- Compatible with the historic character and architectural styles of the surrounding structures when located within a historic district.

In addition to the Town Code, the Town Board has developed several reference documents to assist applicants and the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board in preparing and reviewing requests for Certificates of Appropriateness. These reference documents include:

- "Standards and Guidelines for Certificates of Appropriateness" as adopted by the Town Board on December 7, 2011.
- "Residential Styles Guides" as adopted by the Town Board on December 7, 2011.
- "Residential Design Standards and Guidelines" as adopted by the Town Board on December 7, 2011 and subsequently amended on September 18, 2012.

These reference documents are available through the Town's website or from the Town's Planning and Zoning Department.

The following are the relevant Town Code provisions that relate to applications requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness:

TOWN CODE
TOWN OF PITTSFORD

ARTICLE XXX, Landmarks, Historic Districts and Certificates of Appropriateness

§ 185-196 Certificate of Appropriateness required.

No person shall carry out any exterior alteration, restoration, reconstruction, demolition, new construction or moving of a designated structure or a structure located within a

historic district, nor shall any person make any material change in the appearance of such a structure, its light fixtures, signs, sidewalks, fences, steps, paving or other exterior elements visible from a public street or alley or from the Erie Canal, without first obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board.

§ 185-197 Criteria for approval of Certificate of Appropriateness.

A. In passing upon an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board shall not consider changes to interior spaces, unless they are open to the public, or to architectural features that are not visible from a public way. A public way shall include the Erie Canal.

B. The Design Review and Historic Preservation Board's decision shall be based upon the following principles:

   1. Designated structures and/or structures which contribute to the character of a historic district shall be retained, with their historic features altered as little as possible.
   2. Any alteration of existing designated structures shall be compatible with its historic character and, if located within a historic district, with the surrounding structures of such historic district.
   3. New construction shall be compatible with the structure and, if located within a historic district, the surrounding structures of such historic district.

C. In applying the principle of compatibility, the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board shall take into consideration any and all distinguishing character-defining features identified at the time such structure was inventoried and/or designated as a landmark, shall be guided by the Standards and Guidelines for Certificates of Appropriateness, dated November 18, 2011, as amended and supplemented, and shall consider the following factors:

   1. The general design, character and appropriateness to the designated structure and/or surrounding structures in a historic district of the proposed alteration or new construction.
   2. The scale of proposed alteration or new construction in relation to the designated structure itself and/or surrounding structures in a historic district.
   3. Texture, materials and color and their relation to similar features of the designated structure and/or surrounding structures in a historic district.
   4. Visual compatibility with the designated structure and/or surrounding structures in a historic district, including the proportion of the structure's front façade, proportion and arrangement of windows and other openings within the façade, roof shape and the rhythm of spacing structures on streets, including setback.
   5. The importance of historic, architectural or other features to the significance of the designated structure and/or its historic district.

§ 185-198 Application procedure.

A. Prior to the commencement of any work requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness, the owner shall file an application for such a certificate with the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board. The application shall contain information sufficient to clearly describe the alteration and/or construction proposed. Such information shall include, as appropriate, the following:

1. The name, address and telephone number of applicant.
2. The location and photographs of the structure.
3. Elevation drawings of proposed changes, in the case of new construction or additions to a structure. Perspective drawings, including relationship to adjacent structures, in the case of new construction or additions to a structure.
4. Perspective drawings, including relationship to adjacent structures, in the case of new construction or additions to a structure.
5. Samples of color and materials to be used.
6. Where the proposal includes signs or lettering, a scale drawing showing the type of lettering to be used, all dimensions and colors, a description of materials to be used, method of illumination and a plan showing the sign's location on the property.
7. Any other information which the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board may deem necessary in order to visualize the proposed new construction and/or addition.

B. No building or demolition permit shall be issued for such proposed work until a Certificate of Appropriateness has first been issued by the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board. The Certificate of Appropriateness required by this section shall be in addition to and not in lieu of any building or other permit that may be required by this chapter or any other law or ordinance of the Town.

C. The Design Review and Historic Preservation Board shall hold a public hearing on the application at which an opportunity will be provided for proponents and opponents of the application to present their views. The Board shall approve, deny, or approve with conditions the application within 62 days from the close of the public hearing.

D. All decisions of the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board shall be in writing. A copy shall be sent to the applicant and a copy filed with the Town Clerk's office for public inspection. The Design Review and Historic Preservation Board’s decision shall state the reasons for granting, denying or modifying any application.

§ 185-199 Hardship.

A. Hardship criteria.

1. An applicant whose Certificate of Appropriateness for a proposed demolition has been denied may apply for relief on the ground of hardship. In order to prove the existence of hardship, the applicant shall establish that:

a. The structure is incapable of earning a reasonable return,

regardless of whether that return represents the most profitable return possible;

b. The structure cannot be adapted for any other use, whether by the current owner or by a purchaser, which would result in a reasonable return; and

c. Efforts to find a purchaser interested in acquiring the structure and preserving it have failed.

2. An applicant whose Certificate of Appropriateness for a proposed alteration has been denied may apply for relief on the ground of hardship. In order to prove the existence of hardship, the applicant shall establish that the property is incapable of earning a reasonable return, regardless of whether that return represents the most profitable return possible.

B. Hardship application procedure.

1. After receiving written notification from the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board of the denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness, an applicant may commence the hardship process. No building permit or demolition permit shall be issued unless the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board makes a finding that a hardship exists.

2. The Design Review and Historic Preservation Board may hold a public hearing on the hardship application at which an opportunity will be provided for proponents and opponents of the application to present their views.

3. The applicant shall consult in good faith with the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board, local preservation groups and interested parties in a diligent effort to seek an alternative that will result in the preservation of the structure.

4. All decisions of the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board shall be in writing. A copy shall be sent to the applicant and a copy filed with the Town Clerk's office for public inspection. The Design Review and Historic Preservation Board‘s decision shall state the reasons for granting or denying the hardship application.

5. Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions of this section, an applicant may combine a hardship application with an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness in the first instance.

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TOWN OF PITTSFORD

Design Review & Historic Preservation Board
Application for Certificate of Appropriateness

Case # _____

1. Property Address: _____

2. Tax Account Number: _____

3. Applicant's Name: _____

   Address: _____ Phone: _____
   Street

   _____ E-mail: _____
   City *State* *Zip Code*

4. Applicant's Interest in Property:

   Owner: ☐ Lessee: ☐ Holding Purchase Offer: ☐

   Other *(explain)*: _____

5. Owner *(if other than above)*: _____

   Address: _____ Phone: _____
   Street

   _____ E-mail: _____
   City *State* *Zip Code*

   Has the Owner been contacted by the Applicant? Yes ☐ No ☐

6. Application prepared by: _____

   Address: _____ Phone: _____
   Street

   _____ E-mail: _____
   City *State* *Zip Code*

7. Project Design Professional *(if Available)*: _____

   Address: _____ Phone: _____
   Street

   _____ E-mail: _____
   City *State* *Zip Code*

8. Project Contractor *(if Available)*: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____
Street

_____ E-mail: _____
City *State* *Zip Code*

9. Present use of Property: _____

10. Zoning District of Property: _____

11. Is the property located in a Town Designated Historic District?

Yes ☐ No ☐

12. Is the property listed on the National Registry of Historic Places?

Yes ☐ No ☐

13. Will State or Federal Funding be used in this project, or will the project result in an application for Tax Credits or other State and Federal benefits?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, please explain:

14. Proposed Exterior Improvements:

A. Describe all exterior architectural improvements proposed with this project (include project materials and finishes; attach additional sheets if necessary):

B. Describe all significant site improvements proposed with this project (include proposed changes in landscaping, significant plant material alterations, and other improvements associated with hardscape materials such as driveways and retaining walls; attach additional sheets if necessary):

15. If the structure is a Commercial Property open to the Public, please describe all interior improvements proposed at the project site (attach additional sheets if necessary).

16. Additional materials submitted with this application *(if available)*:

- ☐ Parcel map
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other materials _____
- ☐ Architectural elevations
- ☐ Architectural plans

Applicant Certification:

I certify to the best of my knowledge that the information supplied on this application is complete and accurate.

_____ _____

Signature of applicant *Date*

Owner Consent:

If the applicant is other than the owner, does the owner concur with this application?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, owner's signature: _____