



Thank you for your interest in improving property in Menasha's Historic Districts

This guidebook is intended to make you aware of the benefits and responsibilities of preserving Menasha's historic properties. It will also provide information regarding the process and approvals needed for:

- new construction or renovation of buildings in the district
- the erecting or replacement of signage
- the erecting or replacement of outdoor dining or entertainment areas

Projects that are eligible for loans or grants are described on page 6.

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Properties included in the Downtown Historical District

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- Activities that qualify
- The application process
- Timeline for approval

Pocket. Resources Included-

- Façade improvement application
- Approved façade paint color chart
- Façade grant application
- Signage approval application
- Approved signage guide
- Architectural design consultants listing
- Menasha Landmarks Commission member contact information

The Purpose of a Historic District

The Historic District is intended to protect and conserve the heritage and character of the community by providing for the preservation of designated areas within the planning jurisdiction, including individual properties therein that embody important elements of social, economic, political, or architectural history, and by promoting the stabilization and enhancement of property values throughout such areas.

It is intended that these regulations ensure, insofar as possible, that buildings or structures in the Historic District shall be in harmony with other buildings or structures located therein.

However, it is not the intention of these regulations to require the reconstruction or restoration of individual or original buildings, or to prohibit the demolition or removal of such buildings, or to impose architectural styles from particular historic periods, but rather to encourage design, whether contemporary or traditional, which is harmonious with the character of the Historic District.

A district possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development.

The Benefits of Being Located in a Historic District

Historic preservation has emerged as having a positive economic impact on the community. This impact is measurable and has been demonstrated in many cities around the world.

People are drawn to a city's unique character created by a backdrop of historic buildings, sites and streetscapes. Menasha has a downtown rich with history and the sense of place created by streets and structures built more than 100 years ago. The downtown area is striking in its relationship to and history with the river.

Historic downtown properties tell a remarkable story that is unique to Menasha. This sense of place is a powerful marketing tool. And there are other benefits to historic preservation.

A restored historic commercial district serves as a centerpiece of community life, a place to shop, invest, recreate, and live. Studies show that property values in local historic districts appreciate at greater rates than the local market, especially in districts with local regulatory controls.

Preserving historic buildings saves energy and resources and is now recognized as one of the most important proactive methodologies available for reducing carbon emissions. It has been said that the most environmentally green building is one that is already built.



Project Guidelines for a Historical District

Exterior Alterations

A permit is required for any alteration to the exterior of a designated historic structure or a structure within a historic district, or causing any physical change to a designated historic site. Exterior alterations include but are not limited to, the construction of additions, the installation of siding, windows, doors, awnings and signage, and the application of paint or any other exterior coatings.

Demolition & New Construction

Designated Historic Structures or sites may not be demolished nor may new buildings be constructed or uses be established unless a permit is granted. Permitting requirements are the same as for building alterations. In reviewing the proposed demolition or new construction, the Landmarks Commission considers the following:

- whether the building or structure is in such a deteriorated condition that restoration is not structurally or economically feasible.
- whether a new structure or change in use would be compatible with other buildings and environment of the district.
- whether the architectural or historical significance of the structure is such that demolition would be contrary to the public interest.
- whether demolition would be contrary to the intent of the Landmarks Commission ordinance or an adopted historic preservation plan.
- whether the building or structure is of such old, unusual, or uncommon design that it could not be reproduced.

whether retention of the building or structure would encourage - knowledge and understanding of history, architecture, or design.

Application

Persons contemplating additions or alterations should contact the city's Community Development Department. Applicants **must** provide a description and/or sketch of the proposed change.

Upon receipt, the Community Development Director confers with the Landmarks Commission chairman who determines whether the application should be referred to the commission for review and recommendation.

Review

If the Chairman determines that the change is significant enough to warrant commission review, a meeting is scheduled to be held within 10 days. In reviewing the proposed change, the ...

Landmarks Commission employs the following criteria:

- whether the proposed work would detrimentally change, destroy or adversely affect any exterior architectural feature;
- whether construction of a new structure would adversely affect or would not harmonize with the appearance of neighboring improvements; and
- whether a property in a designated historic district complies with the objectives and criteria of an approved Historic Preservation Plan.

Consultation

The Landmarks Commission consults with the applicant to learn of specific needs and concerns. The commission may offer specific suggestions on the use of methods and building materials to achieve the applicant's objectives. Through this process, the structural renovations can be accomplished in a manner that is sensitive to the building's history and architecture, as well as the applicant's functional and financial concerns.

Decision

Within thirty days of referral, the Landmarks Commission shall make a finding concerning the appropriateness of the proposed change. If approved, a permit shall be issued and the work may proceed. If the commission finds that the proposed work does not meet the review criteria, a permit may not be issued.

Appeal

If the Landmarks Commission does not act within the specified time period or finds that the proposed change does not meet the review criteria, the applicant may appeal the commission's decision to the Common Council.

Downtown Historic District



Washington Street Historic District



Project Approval Steps



Step 1.

Go to the Community Development Office at City Hall to pick up an application.



Step 2.

Fill out the application and attach drawings or photographic samples of your proposed signage, facade changes or outdoor dining area. *It will expedite the process if you have paint color samples, material samples or brochures showing the building materials and products you intend to use.*



Step 3.

Bring your completed application along with copies of all your project drawings, photos and other detail documents back to the Community Development Office. They will determine if your application is ready. If it needs more work, they will assist you on how best to proceed. If it is complete they will put you on the agenda for the soonest available Landmarks Commission meeting. Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month.

Note: If weather or other considerations require that your project be reviewed earlier than the next regularly scheduled meeting, a special session may be called.



Step 4.

Attend the scheduled Landmarks Commission meeting to present your project.

Step 5.

If the Commission feels your plans need to be adjusted to better fit the Historical District, they will provide ideas and direction.

If your plans are approved, you will receive a Certificate of Appropriateness allowing you to proceed with your project

