



TOWN OF WINCHESTER

OFFICE OF THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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TOWN PLANNER

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Town Demolition and Renovation Information

Chapter 14 of Winchester’s Code of Bylaws, titled “Preservation of Historically Significant Buildings,” promotes preservation and protection of historically significant buildings – those that reflect distinctive features of historical, architectural, archeological and cultural significance to the Town – and limits the detrimental effects of demolitions when preservation cannot be achieved.

Proposed demolition or movement of a structure from its foundation triggers review of its historical significance and an evaluation of its eligibility for preservation efforts. An “Eligible Building,” as defined in Chapter 14, applies to any building or portion thereof located in the Town:

- (a) which is listed individually on, or is a contributing Building within a district listed on, the National Register of Historic Places or State Register of Historic Places,*
- (b) which is included in the Massachusetts Historical Commission’s “Inventory of Historic and Archeological Assets of the Commonwealth” (Inventory), or*
- (c) which was constructed during or before 1940.*

Homeowners or potential buyers may determine whether a building is “Eligible” by consulting:

- (a) The National Register of Historic Places by State or District:
<https://nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/ma/state.html> or
<https://nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/ma/districts.html>*
- (b) The Massachusetts Cultural Resources Information System - <http://mhc-macris.net/>*
- (c) The Winchester Building Department.*

Research about Winchester buildings and sites is ongoing and additional properties will become “Eligible” for review in the future. Some of the properties newly listed in the *Massachusetts Cultural Resources Information System* **have post-1940 dates, making them eligible for review**. Newly eligible properties may not appear on-line immediately. Please contact Town Planner, Brian Szekely (781-721-7162; bszekely@winchester.us) or Historical Commission Chair Jack LeMenager (781-454-7611; j.lemenager@comcast.net) for further information.

If a property is “Eligible,” the Commission may conduct research to evaluate a structure’s historical significance. It may hold a public hearing where documentation is reviewed and stakeholders, including neighbors, have an opportunity to speak. After public comments, the Commission will determine: 1) whether the property meets criteria for a determination of significance; and if so, 2) whether to impose a delay of up to 12 months on issuance of the demolition permit.

The primary goal of such delays are to preserve historically significant buildings through renovation and adaptive re-use. However, in some cases, the Commission may lift a demolition delay if it is satisfied that a comparably scaled and designed new building will minimally impact the historic built environment.