

# THE BROOKLINE PRESERVATION COMMISSION

---



## Design Guidelines for Local Historic Districts

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



# Acknowledgments

---

A major revision of the Brookline Preservation Commission's previous Local Historic District Guidelines was adopted on July 8, 2003. We wish to thank former Commissioner William Rizzo for his important contribution to that revision. Additional revisions were adopted by the Commission on October 12, 2005. The guidelines were also added to and revised in 2013.

These guidelines supersede all previous revisions.

This report and the revisions were prepared by the Preservation Division of the Brookline Department of Planning and Community Development. Special thanks to Richard Perkins, of ICON Architecture, for his graphic design assistance, Anne Wilkerson, Planner, for her support and advice, Tim Richards, Planner, Jed Fehrenbach for his GIS skills, Anne MacIver and Jonah Fay, interns and Jean Innamorati and Greer Hardwicke, Preservation Planners.

## **Brookline Planning and Community Development Department**

Alison Steinfeld, Director

## **Preservation Division**

Meghan Hanrahan Richard, Preservation Planner

Tonya Loveday, Preservation Planner

For further information or assistance, contact the Preservation Office in the Town's Planning and Community Development Department at Town Hall, 333 Washington Street, Brookline

Preservation Office, 617-730-2089 or 617-730-2617

[www.brooklinema.gov/preservation](http://www.brooklinema.gov/preservation)

Text initially approved by the Commission October 12, 2003; revised 2005,  
Published February 2006

Revised with renewable energy systems section and additional LHDs  
January 2016

# Letter from the Preservation Commission

---

## Letter from the Preservation Commission

---



## TOWN OF BROOKLINE

*Massachusetts*

### BROOKLINE PRESERVATION COMMISSION

DAVID KING, Chair  
ELTON ELPERIN, Vice Chair  
JANIS EASTBROOK  
PAUL SELL  
WENDY BOKAR  
ROBERTA BATTISTINI  
PETER KLUMBER  
EMILY GAMBLE BRIGGS, Secretary  
GUY GARDNER SMITHSON, Treasurer

January 2016

Dear Brookline Residents:

The Brookline Preservation Commission was created to protect and preserve the Town's neighborhoods and structures of historic and architectural significance. When a significant building or neighborhood is torn down or allowed to deteriorate, a part of our past disappears forever, and the character of a street or neighborhood is unalterably changed.

Brookline has eight local historic districts: Pill Hill, Cottage Farm, Chestnut Hill North, Graffam-McKay, Harvard Avenue, Lawrence Wild-Sargent and Crowninshield. These districts contain a variety of styles reflecting Brookline's varied neighborhoods that contribute to the architectural and historical qualities of the Town. A significant number of buildings within these districts are also listed in the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

Beyond the boundary lines of local historic districts, the Preservation Commission can do little more than create public awareness of architectural treasures, and, at best, delay by up to eighteen months the demolition of structures deemed historically and architecturally significant. In local historic districts, however, the Commission can prevent demolition or inappropriate alteration of exterior features of any building within the district as well as the construction of any new building which would be incongruous with the historic aspects or architectural characteristics of its surroundings or the district. The Preservation Commission encourages neighborhoods to establish local historic districts as the best way to preserve the unique character of the Town of Brookline.

Remember that any work, even repair and exact replacement requires an application and office review. Please do not hesitate to call the office for any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David King".

David King  
Chair

Town Hall 333 Washington Street Brookline, MA 02445 Tel:(617)730-2089 Fax (617)730-2442

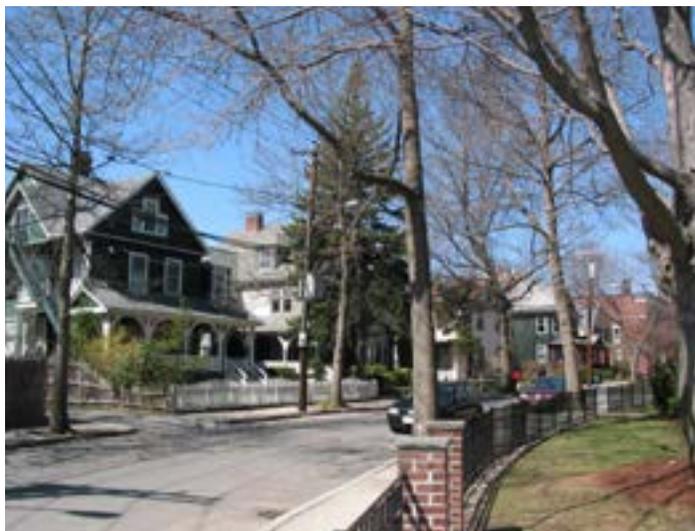
Local Historic District Guidelines • Town of Brookline • 2016

# Table of Contents

---

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Brookline's Local Historic District Maps</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Design Review Principles</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>What Does &amp; Does Not Require Review</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>The Design Review Process</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Local District Application Process</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>General Guidelines</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Walls and Trim</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Windows</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Masonry and Stucco</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Chimneys, Gutters, and Roofs</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Fences and Walls</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Doors and Steps; Porches</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>New Construction</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Renewable Energy Systems</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Demolition</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Frequently Asked Questions</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Application and Instructions</b>	<b>28</b>

Spooner Road  
Chestnut Hill North Local Historic District



Harvard Avenue  
Harvard Avenue Local Historic District

# Introduction

---

Town Meeting has created eight local historic districts: Cottage Farm in 1979, Pill Hill in 1983, Graffam-McKay in 2004, Chestnut Hill North and Harvard Avenue in 2005, Lawrence in 2011 Wild-Sargent in 2012 and Crowninshield in 2015. The Brookline Preservation Commission (the "Commission") administers these Districts pursuant to the Commonwealth's Historic Districts Act (MGL Chapter 40C) and the Town's Preservation Commission & Historic Districts By-law (Article 5.6). The Selectmen appoint seven members and up to four alternate members to the Commission, which meets monthly.

The Staff of the Commission is part of the Department of Planning and Community Development. The Staff is available to work with applicants to ensure that they submit complete applications, to answer questions regarding the policies, procedures and design guidelines under which the Commission operates, and to serve as a resource for preservation issues.

The Specific Design Guidelines which begin on page 15 of this booklet are, as their name implies, guidelines intended to encourage appropriate design by applicants and foster predictability in Commission actions. While the Commission has the authority, in its exercise of discretion, to permit applicants to depart from the Guidelines, applicants are encouraged to follow them to the greatest extent possible and should not expect that the Commission will permit applicants to depart from them in most circumstances. The Commission does not anticipate departing from certain of the Guidelines, such as that regarding artificial siding, under any circumstances. Further, it should be understood that certain properties, and the specific features of certain properties, may have greater than usual architectural or historic significance.

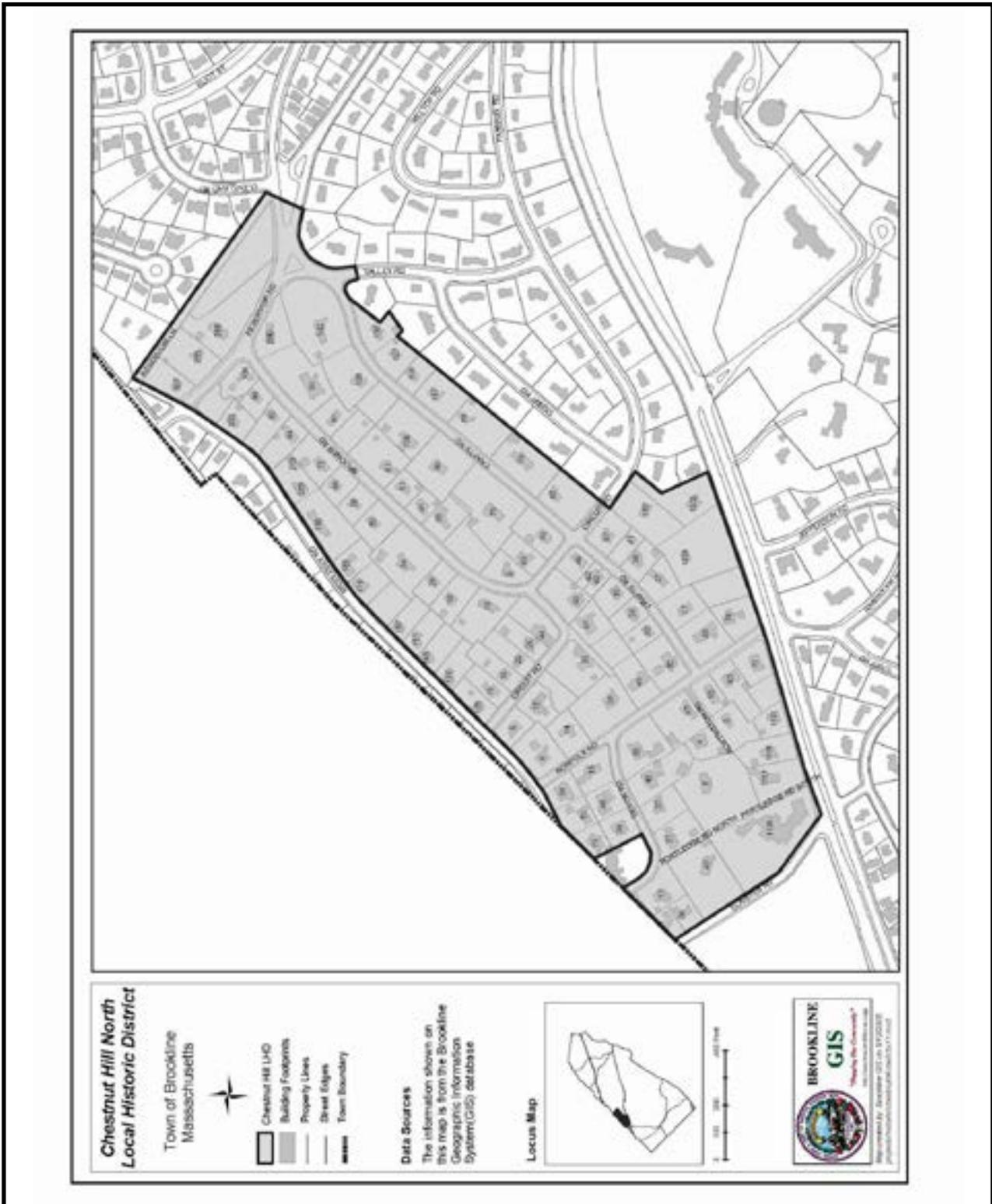


6 Chilton Street, 1935  
Cottage Farm Local Historic District

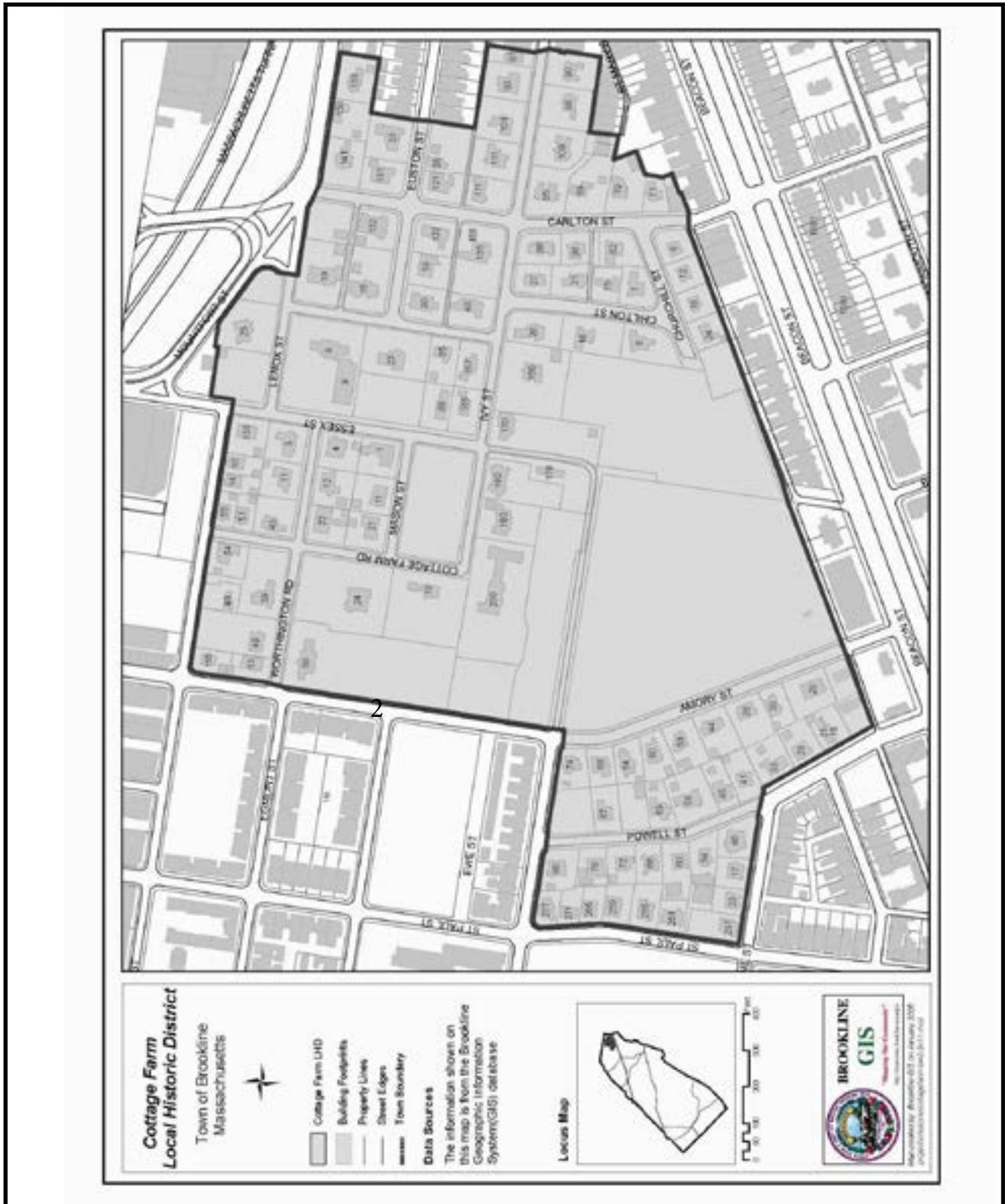
76 High Street, 1879  
Pill Hill Local Historic District



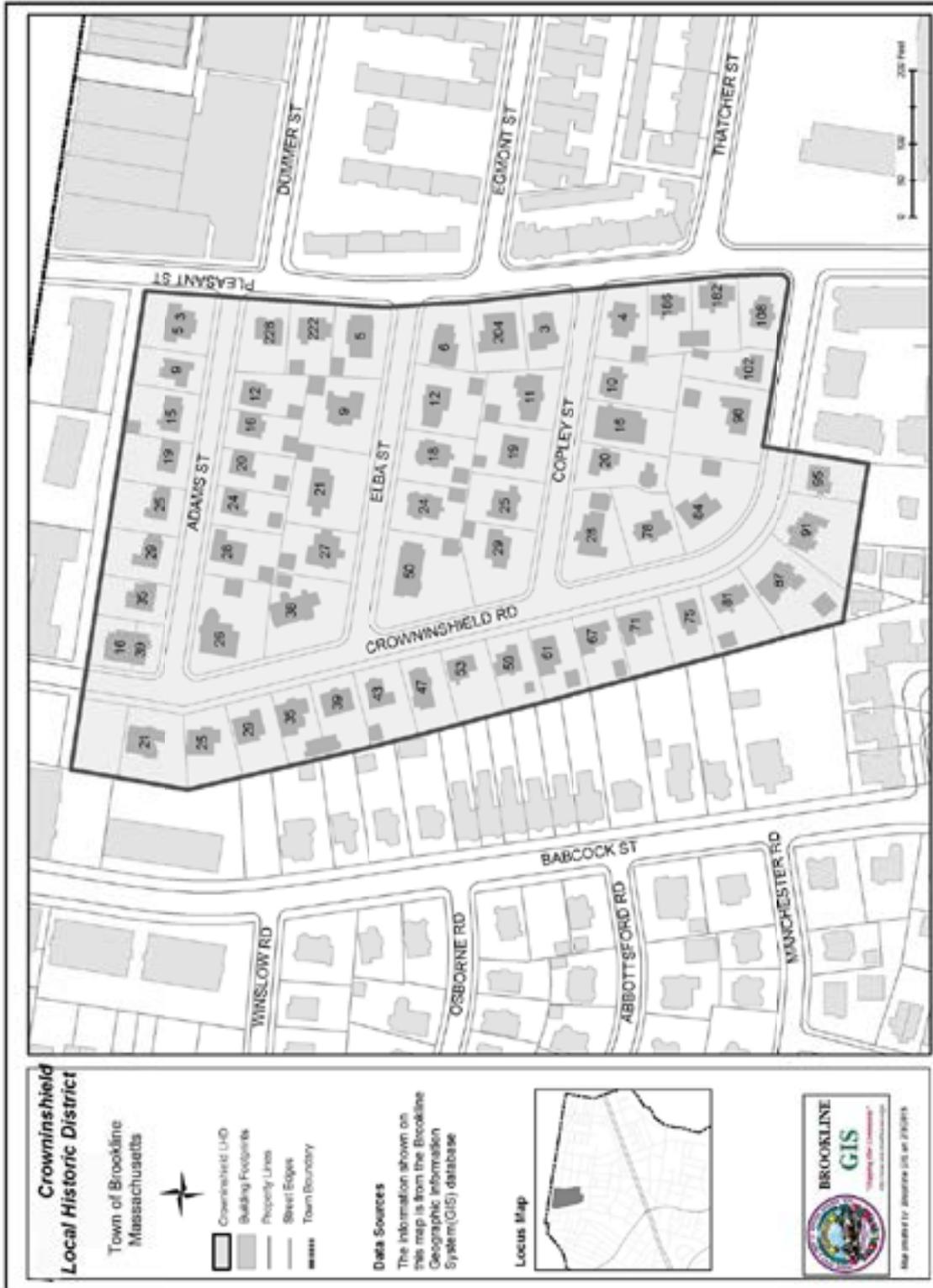
# Brookline's Local Historic Districts



# Brookline's Local Historic Districts



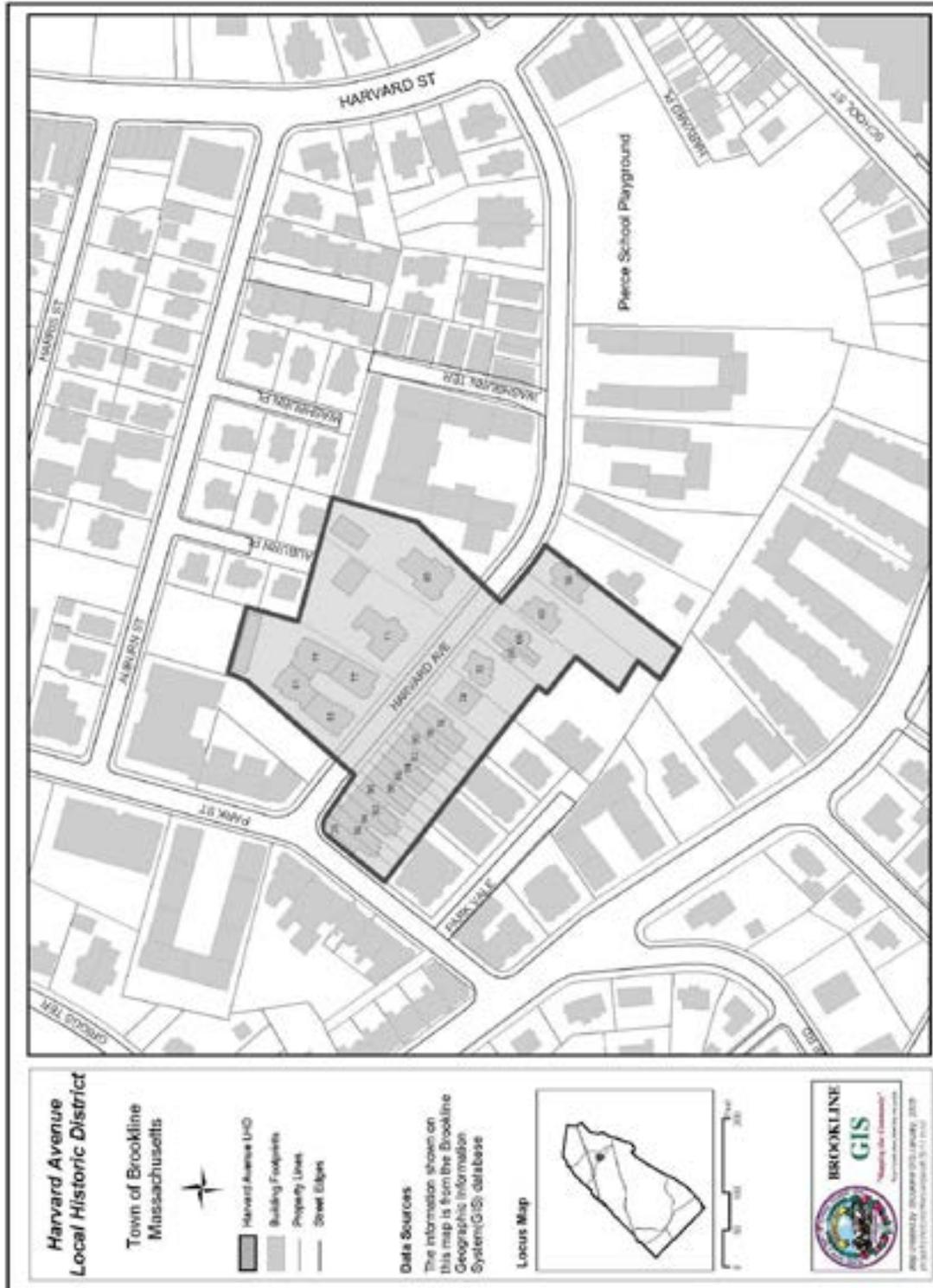
# Brookline's Local Historic Districts



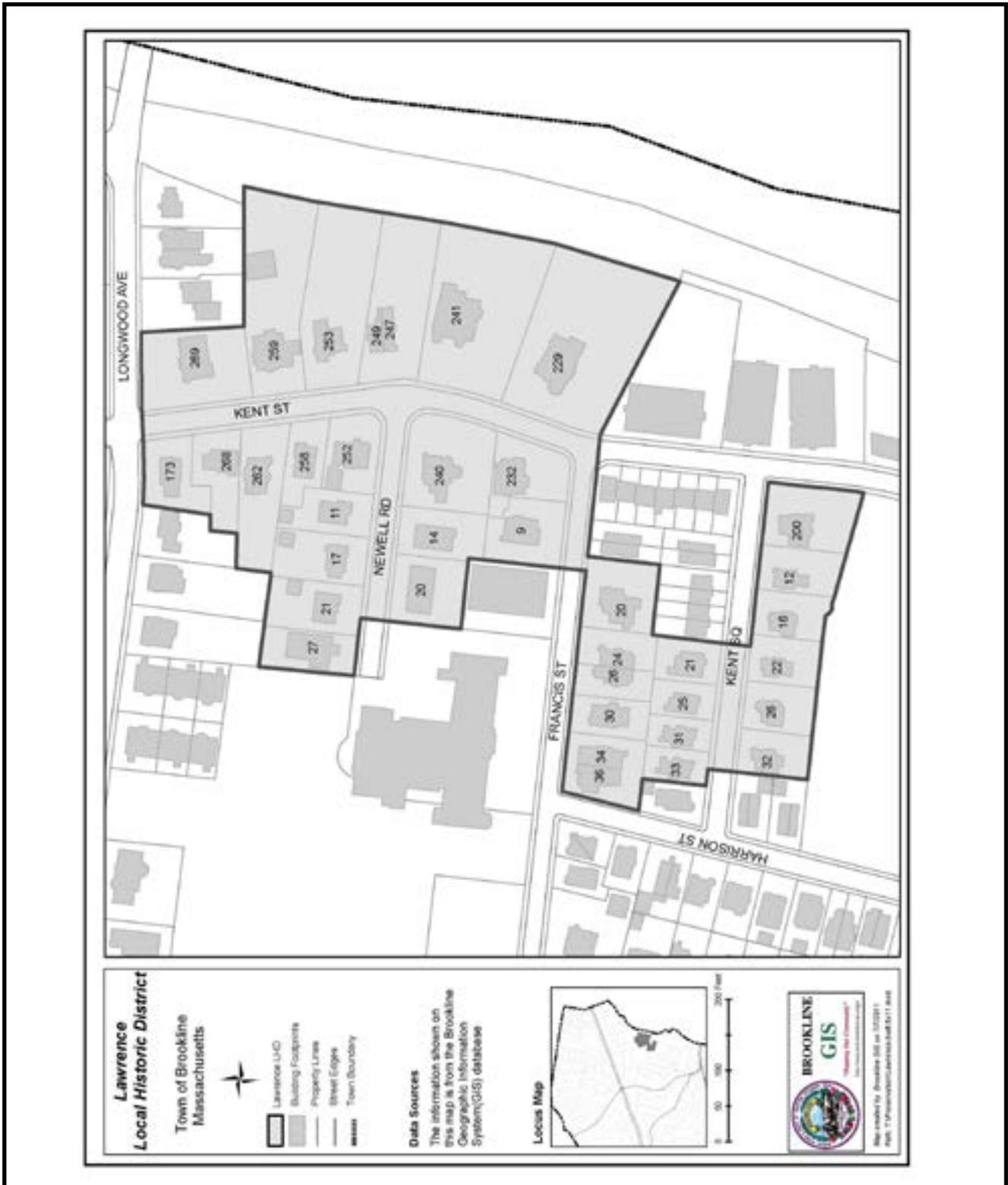
# Brookline's Local Historic Districts



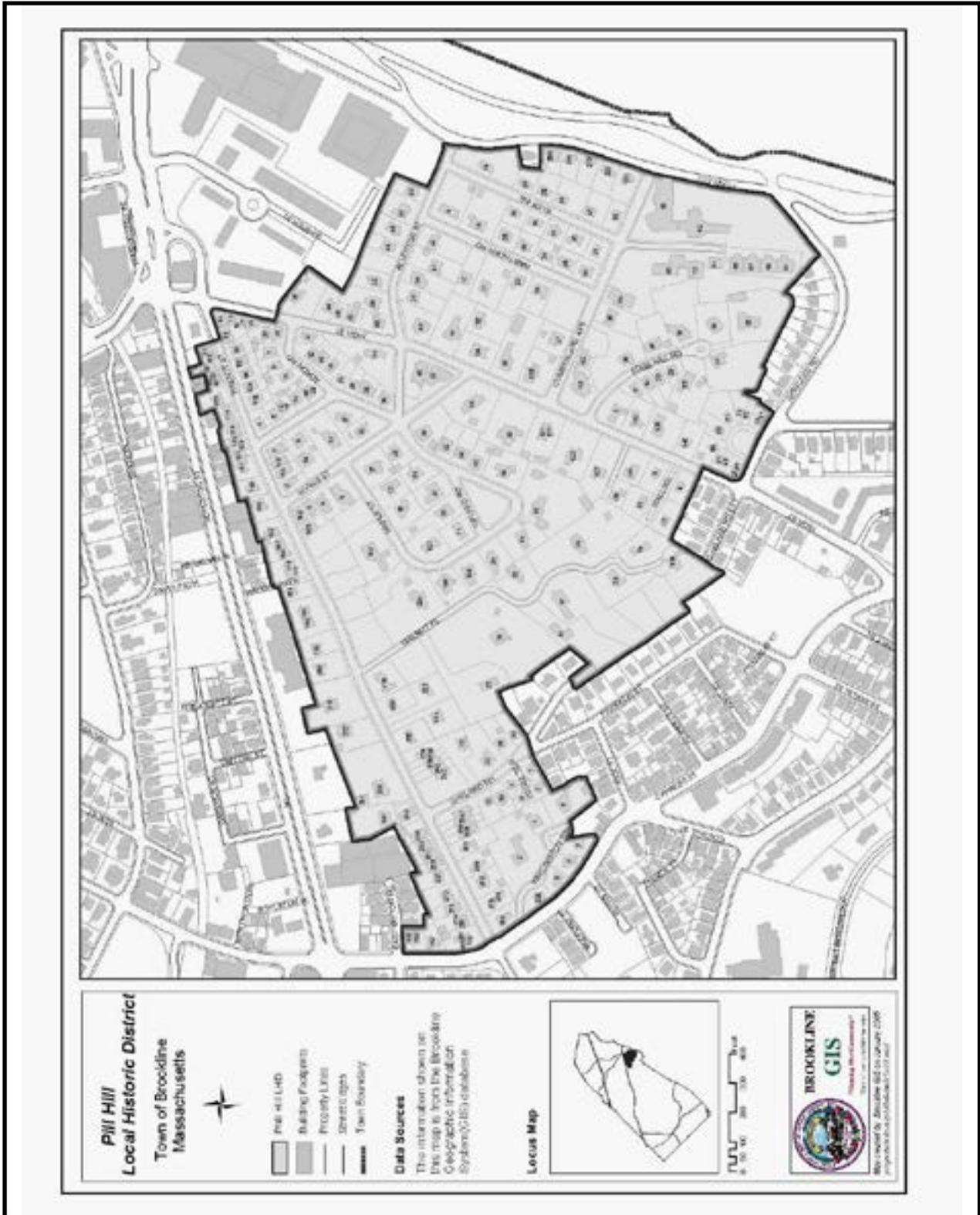
# Brookline's Local Historic Districts



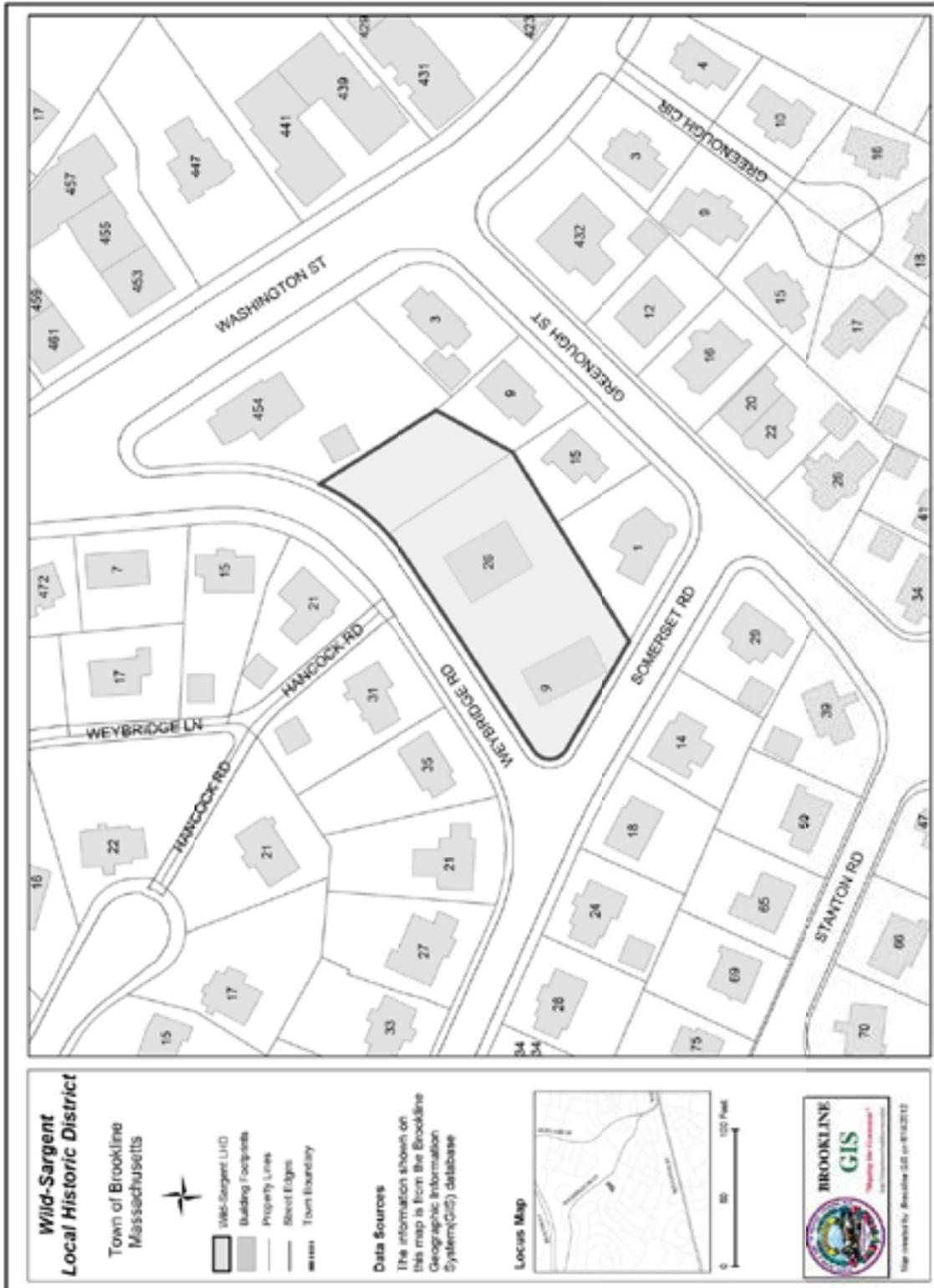
# Brookline's Local Historic Districts



# Brookline's Local Historic Districts



# Brookline's Local Historic Districts



## Design Review Principles

---

When reviewing individuals applications, the Commission will be guided by the following design principles, which have been adapted from the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (1995):

- *The historic character of a property should be retained and preserved.* The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property should be avoided.
- *Each property should be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use.* Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, should be avoided.
- *Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right should be retained and preserved.*
- *New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction that destroy historic materials, features and spatial relationships that characterize the property should be avoided.* New work should be differentiated from the old and should be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale, proportion and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
- *New additions and adjacent or related new construction which, if removed in the future, would impair the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment should be avoided.*



9 Francis Street  
Lawrence Local Historic District

## What Work Does and Does Not Require Design Review?

---

**All changes to the exterior of a building that are visible from a public way, park or body of water must be reviewed and approved by the Commission or staff (and a Building Permit).** Such changes include, but are not limited to, repairs, replacements and alterations to windows, doors, roofs, building materials, new construction, additions, fences, walls and changes in grade. For the purposes of determining visibility, existing and proposed wooden fences and landscaping are deemed not to block sight lines from a public way. If there is a question regarding visibility, the final determination will be made by the Chair of the Commission or the chair's designee.

Ordinary like-kind (exact duplicate) repairs and replacement are not subject to design review, although an application, staff approval and a Certificate of Non-Applicability is required before a building permit is issued or work is commenced.



26 Weybridge Road  
Wild-Sargent Local Historic District

The Commission does not review paint colors. However, the appropriateness of the application of paint and stains to previously non-painted surfaces such as masonry, shingles, or siding is subject to review. Any change in roof color is also subject to review.

While landscaping is generally not subject to design review by the Commission, the following are subject to review and approval by the Commission:

- (i) on-grade areas intended for parking more than four motor vehicles,
- (ii) changes to grade,
- (iii) outside HVAC equipment, condensers, and PVC venting pipes (all of these should be located in the rear, if possible) and have some kind of screening and
- (iv) yard structures, including, but not limited to, fences, swimming pools, play houses and pergolas.



233 Walnut Street  
play structure

# The Design Review Process

---

Local historic districts have three purposes:

- 1. To preserve and protect the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places significant to the history of the Commonwealth and its cities and towns;**
- 2. To maintain and improve the settings of those buildings and places; and**
- 3. To assure that new construction is compatible with existing buildings and their historic relationship to other buildings in their vicinity.**

The design review process begins when an application for a *Certificate of Appropriateness*, a *Certificate of Non-Applicability*, or a *Certificate of Hardship*, accompanied by such plans, elevations, and specifications, as may be relevant to the request, is submitted to the Preservation Commission office. Typically, at this stage, the applicant will meet informally with the Staff to discuss the proposed project and go over the information provided. It is advisable to provide as much information, in as much detail, as possible, since an application lacking specificity and clarity may encounter delays in the review process. No building permit for construction, alteration, or demolition of an exterior architectural feature or building within a historic district can be issued without one of the following certificates.

**Certificate of Non-Applicability.** If the Staff determines that the proposed work (i) is not visible from a "public way" (including public paths, parks or bodies of water), or (ii) is a like-kind repair or replacement of existing conditions, then the Chair will issue a Certificate of Non-Applicability and the applicant may apply for a building permit without a public hearing by the Commission.

**Certificate of Appropriateness following a "Ten Day Letter"**. For proposed changes that staff believes are minor or minimally visible from a public way, abutters and commissioners will be notified of the work that is proposed and that staff recommends approval be granted without a hearing. If no objection is made within a ten day period from the date of mailing, a Certificate of Appropriateness will be granted without a hearing. If there is an objection, a public hearing will be held.

**Certificate of Appropriateness following Commission design review.** If the Staff determines that the proposed work is not entitled to a Certificate of Non-Applicability and is not a minor change or minimally visible from a public way, the work must be reviewed by the Commission at a public hearing. Designs that the Commission determines meet the Guidelines are issued a Certificate of Appropriateness. If the design as presented might be acceptable with further revisions, then, with the applicant's concurrence, the Commission may continue the hearing and establish a sub-committee to work with the applicant and architect to arrive at a design consistent with these Guidelines prior to the next public hearing. Modified designs which the Commission determines meet the guidelines are then issued a Certificate of Appropriateness.

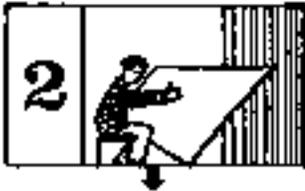
**Certificate of Hardship.** In certain rare cases the Commission may, in its sole discretion, issue a Certificate of Hardship if failure to approve an application would involve a substantial hardship, financial or otherwise, to the applicant, and if the proposed work will not result in a significant detriment to the local historic district.

# The Local District Application Process

---



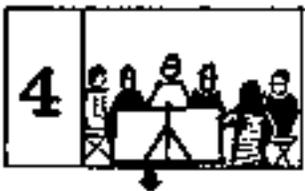
**PRELIMINARY DESIGN  
DISCUSSIONS WITH THE  
COMMISSION STAFF**



**DESIGN**



**SUBMISSION TO COMMISSION  
OFFICE**



**PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
REVIEW (if needed)**



**APPROVAL WITH  
CERTIFICATE  
ISSUED**

When you receive approval, finalize the plans and bring them to the Commission office to be stamped and signed. Then submit the plans and certificate to the Building Department to obtain a building permit.

The project may then proceed.

**BUILDING PERMIT  
WITH  
SIGNED APPROVED  
PLANS**



**CONSTRUCTION**

## General Guidelines

---

These Guidelines are intended to encourage appropriate design by applicants and foster predictability in Commission actions. While the Commission can, in the exercise of its discretion, permit applicants to depart from the Guidelines, applicants are encouraged to follow them to the greatest extent possible and should not expect that the Commission will permit exceptions to them in most circumstances. The Commission does not anticipate departing from certain of the Guidelines, such as that regarding artificial siding, under any circumstances. Further, it should be understood that certain properties, and the specific features of certain properties, may be treated as having greater than usual architectural or historic significance.

Although the points listed in these General Guidelines are covered in greater detail in the Specific Design Guidelines that begin on the following page, these nine general guidelines are listed here to highlight their importance:

- ORNAMENTAL AND DECORATIVE DETAILING SHOULD NOT BE REMOVED.
- DETERIORATED ORNAMENTAL, DECORATIVE AND CHARACTERISTIC ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES SHOULD BE REPAIRED, RATHER THAN REPLACED.
- NO ARTIFICIAL SIDING MAY BE INSTALLED.
- WOOD WINDOWS AND METAL CASEMENT WINDOWS SHOULD BE RETAINED.
- THERE SHOULD BE NO NEW OPENINGS ON PRINCIPAL FAÇADES, EXCEPT TO RESTORE ORIGINAL OR PRE-EXISTING OPENINGS.
- MISSING ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES SHOULD BE DOCUMENTED AS AUTHENTIC BY PHOTOGRAPHIC, PHYSICAL OR HISTORICAL EVIDENCE BEFORE THEY ARE REPRODUCED.
- HISTORIC CARRIAGE BARNs AND AUTOMOBILE GARAGES SHOULD BE PRESERVED.
- NEW FENCES SHOULD NOT ACT AS VISUAL BARRIERS.
- TRADITIONAL BUILDING MATERIALS SHOULD BE USED FOR EXISTING BUILDINGS.



255 Walnut Street with exterior siding and ornamental trim intact.



249 Walnut Street with original siding and ornamental trim covered or removed.

## Walls and Trim

---

Wood trim clapboards and novelty siding on pre-modern houses should be painted or covered with pigmented stain. Clear varnish is inappropriate, except for porch ceilings. Unpainted pressure treated wood, where visible, is inappropriate

- Trim and detailing should not be removed.
- Replacement wood siding or shingles should replicate the materials, dimensions, detailing and patterns of the original.
- Artificial siding, including, but not limited to, vinyl, aluminum, asphalt, and artificial brick and stone, may not be used.
- Shutters and shutter hardware should be retained or replicated exactly-in-kind and, if originally operable, should be mounted to remain so. Shutters may be removed for exterior painting of buildings, provided that the owner shall give the Commission prior notice and written assurances that all shutters and shutter hardware on the building will be promptly reinstalled. Shutter hardware on the building should not be removed, even if the shutters are missing.
- Awnings may be allowed if appropriate for the style of the building. They must be fabricated of canvas and their color is subject to review.



Exterior trim can range from this simple farm house on Walnut Street, shown above, to the complex ornamental details of the Queen Anne style house on Edgehill Road. Note the “blind window” on the house above, an historical treatment occasionally seen when sash has been removed.

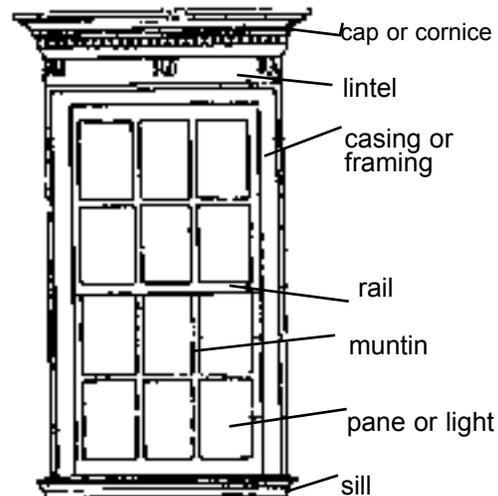
# Windows

---

- Existing windows should be repaired, not replaced. The Commission has available names of window rehabilitation specialists.
- If an applicant believes that an existing window cannot be repaired, the applicant's proposal for replacing any window[s] will be reviewed on a window-by-window basis.
- If a replacement window is proposed, the material and design of the existing window, including the casing, size, number of panes and type of window ( e.g. single pane, true divided light), should not be changed, unless the window is not a character-defining feature of a façade, in which case minor changes in the proposed replacement window may be approved by the Commission.
- If a replacement window is proposed, it should not have muntin bars greater than 7/8" wide and should not have jamb liners contrasting in color to the windows.
- If a window in new construction has insulating glass and if the division of the lites of glass by muntins is deemed appropriate by the Commission, it should have either "true divided lites with muntins" no wider than 7/8" or (i) permanently applied muntins no wider than 7/8" and (ii) dark colored internal spacer bars, but it should not have either flat muntin grids applied to the inside or outside panes nor removable muntin grids.
- New and replacement windows should not be clad in non-historic materials. Vinyl or vinyl-clad and metal-framed sash, and replacement windows incorporating external storm panels that are integrated into the sash, should not be used.
- Tinted "solar" glass should not be used.



Historic window and storm window on Euston Street with correctly hung shutters.



Elements of a six-over-six double hung sash window.

## Windows

---

- Wood frames should not be metal panned and the dimensions of window openings, jambs and sashes should not be changed.
- The Commission encourages the repair/reconstruction of steel casement windows. If casement windows cannot be repaired or reconstructed, the Commission will consider the replacement of steel casement windows with aluminum or fiberglass casement windows designed to replicate exactly the appearance of the original steel windows.
- Stained glass or decorative windows should be retained.
- Storm windows are not reviewed by the Commission, provided that the installation of the storm windows does not alter the existing windows or frames and provided further that they are not external storm panels that are integrated into the sash. Such storm panels are not storm windows. Painting of the fixed portion of storm window frames is encouraged.



A window in an 1883 Shingle Style house with shimmering reflections in its irregular original glass.



Modern replacement window with false muntin bars inserted between double panes of insulating glass. Changes in atmospheric pressure creates this type of "fun house" mirror.

## Windows

---

### **Why the Commission encourages retention of original windows.**

*The windows of your house are an important part of its original fabric. In fact, along with any masonry or slate, window glass is often the only untouched original surface normally seen in most houses (most wood surfaces are routinely painted, while floors are typically sanded down to look like new). The replacement of existing windows and storm windows with double-glazed windows, whether as an alternative to maintenance and repair or because of claims of greater efficiency, is strongly discouraged. There are several reasons for this.*

*Historic windows assembled with old growth wood are more durable than most modern windows manufactured with commonly available new growth wood. Properly maintained, historic windows will last indefinitely.*

*The best modern "organic seal" double glazing has a guaranteed life of only 20 years and will inevitably fail (cloud up).*

*One sheet of glass in a sash, even with external applied "muntins", reflects light in a different manner than the multiple panes, set in putty, found in a typical old sash. This remains apparent even when the old sash is behind a storm window.*

*Similarly, the original glass found in most old sash is at least somewhat irregular which also contributes to a liveliness of the reflections from old windows.*

*Sheets of insulating glass bow inward during periods of higher atmospheric pressure and outward during lower pressure, producing a "fun house mirror" effect in their reflections*

*Replacement windows are factory made to standard designs and will never exactly match existing sash in all dimensions.*

*Most of the thermal benefits of insulated glass windows derive from the fact that there are two layers of glass with dead air between them and that the window and its installation in the wall is well sealed against air infiltration. A properly weather-stripped, well caulked, single glazed window (new or rebuilt), with good quality storm windows has the same energy efficiency of a standard insulating glass window.*

Generally, the repair and rehabilitation of existing sash, including the installation of weathstripping and good quality storms, can be accomplished at no greater cost than that of replacement insulating glass windows and, if properly maintained, will last much longer.

## Masonry and Stucco

---

- Unpainted masonry should not be painted.
- Sealants should not be applied to masonry, unless a sealant is necessary to prevent further deterioration. In all cases, the use of sealants is subject to review by the Commission.
- Repointing masonry (sometimes referred to as tuck pointing) should be appropriate in terms of the type, color and aggregate of the mortar to be used and the width and profile of the joint. Joints should not be widened when cutting out old mortar. New mortar should be kept off the face of masonry.
- Sandblasting should not be used to clean brick.
- Variegated bricks should not be used, unless to match an existing condition.
- Stucco should be repaired with a mixture that matches the original as closely as possible. Non-traditional resin based stuccos should not be used.



These two examples show the importance of repointing using mortar that matches the original in material, color and joint profile. In the example above, the historic appearance of the masonry has been maintained. The example on the right shows poor repointing that has altered the historic appearance of the building and will accelerate the deterioration of the brick.



## Chimneys, Gutters, and Roofs

---

- Slate and terra cotta tile roofing should be repaired or replicated in kind, including color, decorative patterns and style. Synthetic slate or tile should not be used.
- Rubber membrane roofing should not be used in visible locations.
- The height and original pattern of decorative brickwork in chimneys should be maintained.
- All decorative metal, such as iron cresting, finials and weathervanes should be retained.
- Chimney pots are historic features and should be retained whenever possible.
- Wood gutters, when an integral part of an ornamental cornice or roof edge design, should be repaired and maintained. Copper gutters which duplicate the original molding profile of wood gutters may be considered as a replacement for wood gutters. Aluminum gutters should not be used except as like kind replacement.
- Existing copper gutters should be replaced in kind, including matching the original molding profiles.
- Roof top HVAC and other mechanical elements, including soundproofing elements, should be placed out of view.
- Roof decks and enclosures should be unobtrusive.
- Colors, patterns and textures of roofs are subject to review. Typically they are gray, slate, brown or black.
- Chimney fans should be concealed. Chimney caps and attic/roof vents shall be reviewed.

As well as serving a practical function, chimneys and gutters can be important ornamental features.



Queen Anne style chimney



Copper gutters and downspouts.



Wood gutter forming a crown molding for a cornice.

## Fences and Walls

---

- Masonry walls and iron fences should be maintained.
- New fences and walls should not prevent or restrict views of buildings from a public way. Tall solid fences and walls should not be constructed as noise or headlight barriers. The design of fences should be appropriate in scale and architectural style to the building, its site and the surrounding properties.
- New front fences and the front yard portion of side fences should be open in character so as not to create visual barriers.
- New fences and walls running along property lines with street frontage, as well as any section of a side yard lot line fence or wall that is forward of the main body of (i) the applicant's house or outbuilding or (ii) adjacent houses or outbuildings, should not exceed 42 inches in height. Other new fences and walls should not exceed 72 inches in height. Fences running from the side of a building to a side yard fence should not be more than 42 inches high if a higher fence would obscure significant features on the side of the building or site.
- If a new fence or wall is on or near the top of a retaining wall and exceeds 42", then the overall height of the new fence or wall and retaining wall should be measured from the grade on the lower side of the retaining wall, and the visual impact of the combined height from the lower side should be taken into account.



New historically appropriate wood fence erected on Carlton Street.

## Fences and Walls

---

- Metal fences should be historically appropriate in design, materials, construction and assembly to the original period of the house.
- Brick walls should use historically appropriate brick. Bricks and mortar joints should be compatible in color, aggregate and joint profile with the building.
- Stone walls may be dry laid or set in a mortar that is historically appropriate in color, aggregate and joint profile.
- The following should not be used for residential properties: (i) plastic fences, (ii) chain link fences, unless minimally visible, (iii) split rail fences, (iv) stockade fences, unless minimally visible and (v) lattice fences, except as a side or rear yard garden element and (vi) light gauge tubular and roll formed sheet metal fabricated fences.
- For fences directly abutting Route 9, or abutting commercial properties that face Route 9, height limits permitted by zoning apply.



Historic cast iron fence of 19th century design on Walnut Street.



Historic cast iron fence of early 20th century design on Powell Street.



Historic iron and stone fence at Carlton and Ivy Streets.

## Doors, Steps, and Porches

---

- Existing doors and door openings, including transoms and sidelights, should be repaired, not replaced.
- Doors, including garage doors, should not be made of metal or plastic.
- Replacement doors should not incorporate leaded or stained glass except when replicating a lost feature original to the house.
- If an existing door cannot be repaired or is an inappropriate door, the proposed replacement door should be made of wood and, if glazed with muntin bars, should have true divided lights.
- Porches and entrance porticos, including ornamental details, should be retained.
- Open porches and porticos should not be enclosed or glazed.
- Sleeping porches should be retained.
- Porch and entry steps should be replicated in kind.



Colonial Revival style porch on Upland Road.



Queen Anne style portico on Oakland Street.



Historic sleeping porch on Irving Street.



Shingle Style porch on Irving Street.

## New Construction

---

- The Commission will review all proposed alterations of, and additions to, existing structures and all new construction.
- Alterations and additions should be compatible with the character of the building and earlier additions in terms of size, scale, massing, material, location and detail. The original portion of the building and earlier additions should continue to be recognizable apart from the addition by means of massing, articulation of setbacks, trim and ornamental detail. Additions should be designed so that the primary elevations of the original building remain clearly delineated.
- New construction should respect the existing historic streetscape. The historic relationship of buildings to the street, including setbacks and open spaces, should be maintained.
- In areas where historic garages are generally detached, new garages should be detached. Attached garages should be located behind the main mass of the house and/or not facing the street, if possible. Garages with three or more bays are not historically appropriate except on large estates.
- The Commission will consider the appropriateness of the size and shape of the building or structure in relation to both the land area upon which the building or structure is situated and to buildings and structures in the vicinity. The Commission may impose dimensional and setback requirements more restrictive than those required by the Zoning By-law.
- The Commission will consider discrete additions and new buildings incorporating non-historical design vocabularies and materials, as long as they are otherwise consistent with the intent of these Guidelines.



New construction, built 1984, at Free Hospital for Women site, now the Park Condominiums



New house built on Allerton Street in 2005.

## Renewable Energy Systems

---

The Commission will review all proposed Renewable Energy Systems that are visible from a public way, park or body of water. The Commission will follow the principles of minimum intervention and reversibility when reviewing any exterior changes to a structure visible from public views. The Commission recognizes that these systems are not historic but can contribute to a more sustainable future for historic buildings and will endeavor to accommodate them while avoiding or minimizing adverse impact on the historic fabric of individual buildings and districts.



Photovoltaic roof shingles on the house at 267 Walnut Street

- When possible, renewable energy systems should be proposed for installation in locations where they will not be visible from a public way, park or body of water. In cases where this is not practicable, systems attached to buildings should not obscure historic features from public view, or be visible in a way which significantly alters the profile or character of the building.
- Historic materials and features such as cladding, trim, windows, doors, ornamental detailing and other elements should not be removed or altered; slate and terra cotta tile and other historic roofing materials should not be removed or altered. • New construction should respect the existing historic streetscape.
- For proposed installations with visibility from a public way, park or body of water, the Commission will consider the historic and architectural significance of the facades which may be affected, including roofs and rooflines, the historic fabric, including materials, which may be affected, and the reversibility of the proposed system.
- Free-standing or detached installations should be located to minimize their visibility from public view and should not obscure historic features of nearby buildings. The Commission may request that installations be screened or enclosed with materials appropriate to the setting and district.

## Demolition

---

Structures, including additions and outbuildings, should not be demolished.



37 Lenox Street, built 1853. The demolition of this house led to the establishment of the Cottage Farm Local Historic District.



This 1912 garage, and the Mansard house in the rear, were both demolished shortly before the establishment of the Graffam-McKay Local Historic District.

## Amendments and Severability

---

The Commission reserves the right to further amend these Guidelines at any time.

If any section of these Guidelines is deemed to be invalid, illegal, or unconstitutional, then that section shall be severed from the text, and the remaining sections of these Guidelines shall continue to be in full force and effect.

**1. What is the difference between a Local Historic District and being listed in the National Register of Historic Places?**

A Local Historic District is established and maintained by a local community to preserve the unique characteristics of structures and their surroundings, operating under state enabling legislation, Chapter 40C. It provides for review of exterior changes by the local commission. The National Register of Historic Places lists individual buildings, structures and districts “important “ in American history, culture, architecture, or archeology. It is a federal designation and is administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Massachusetts Historical Commission. National Register listing provides limited protection from adverse effects by federally funded, licensed, or assisted programs.

**2. How long will the approval process take?**

The approval process can take as little as two weeks and up to six weeks or more, depending on the timing of the application. Most applications require a 14 day advance notice to abutters before the monthly public hearing

**3. What is required to complete the application?**

Application must include complete supporting materials such as photographs, drawings in plan and in elevation, a site map, sample materials and/or literature about any proprietary products proposed for use. The office staff is ready to assist in the application process.

**4. What are the fees?**

The minimum fee for a Certificate of Appropriateness is \$50.00. There is a sliding scale of \$2.00 per \$1,000 based upon the estimated cost for the work. The fee for a Certificate of Nonapplicability is \$20.00. The fee for a retroactive application is three times the cost, with a minimum of \$150.00 for a Certificate of Applicability and \$60.00 for a Certificate of Nonapplicability. The check should be made out to the Town of Brookline.

**5 What If My Application/Proposal is Denied?**

The appeal procedure is through the Superior Court process.



Naples Road April 5, 1937 (Graffam-McKay Local Historic District)  
The Commission has historic photographs that can aid in restoration of missing architectural features.

# Application



**TOWN OF BROOKLINE**  
 Massachusetts  
 Department of Planning and  
 Community Development

## PRESERVATION COMMISSION

### APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE IN A LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

*(See other side for instructions)*

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	
Application Number:	
Received:	By:
App. Accepted:	
Hearing Date:	
Fee:	
App. Returned:	

TYPE OF CERTIFICATE REQUESTED:	APPROPRIATENESS	NON-APPLICABILITY	HARDSHIP
PROPERTY LOCATION:			
OWNER:			TEL (DAY)
OWNER'S ADDRESS:			TEL (EVE)
			FAX:
OWNER'S E-MAIL:			
APPLICANT (IF NOT OWNER):			
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:			TEL (DAY):
			FAX:
APPLICANT'S E-MAIL:			

**Zoning:** A proposed increase in square footage, height, or enclosed space, including garages, or a change in use or occupancy may require a zoning variance. If a zoning variance is required, the Preservation Commission may not hold a public hearing prior to a hearing before the Zoning Board of Appeals. **Building Permit:** A building permit is required after a Certificate from this office is obtained.

WORK INCLUDES: check all that apply				
Addition:	New Windows:	New Siding:	Repair Porch:	Roofing:
Gutters:	Repair Windows:	Repair Siding:	New Skylights:	Chimney:
Fence:	Wall:	New Doors:	Foundation:	Other:
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WORK WITH COST ESTIMATE:				
Applications with insufficient documentation cannot be properly reviewed and may be cause for a delay in determination. The applicant must supply drawings, photographs of existing conditions, site or plot plans, and other supporting information as needed.				

DOCUMENTATION ATTACHED:				
Photographs:	Materials samples:	Manufacturer's literature:	Drawings:	Site or Plot Pan:
Other:				
Signature:			Date:	
Owner:		Applicant:		

# Application Instructions

---

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40C, the Town of Brookline By-laws, and the Commission's Rules and Regulations. The Preservation Commission approves all changes to buildings and structures, including exterior construction, alterations, repairs or demolition, before the Building Commissioner can issue a building permit. The Commission's review applies to exterior architectural design and features that are visible from a public street, way or park. Visibility is determined by commission staff. Please refer to the Preservation Commission's Design Guidelines for Local Historic Districts prior to hiring a contractor or beginning any design work. They are available online on the Preservation Commission website.

A preliminary site visit or meeting with the Preservation Commission staff is recommended before submitting an application, to provide familiarity with your property and give advice on appropriate approaches.

Applications must be submitted on time and include fees as well as complete supporting materials such as photographs, drawings in plan and in elevation, sample materials and manufacturer's literature for new materials. Application deadlines for Commission are two and one-half week prior to the Commission's meeting. Please be advised that incomplete applications will delay projects while additional material is obtained and additional reviews may be required.

After receiving a completed application, Commission staff will review it and determine which of two procedures will be followed: a public hearing, or a "10-day" letter. Most applications will require a public hearing with 14 days advance notice to abutters before a Certificate can be issued. The hearing is a forum for the full board of Commissioners to hear cases, ask clarifying questions, and for the general public to comment on your project. In some cases where the proposed alteration is of minor significance or minimally visible, a Certificate may be issued following ten days' written notice to abutters. If abutters or the public raise any objection, the application will be reviewed at the next scheduled meeting.

There are three types of Certificates that the Commission issues:

- 1.) **Certificate of Appropriateness:** Issued when the proposed alterations are not incompatible with the existing historic building and the historic and architectural characteristics of the district and its surroundings.
- 2.) **Certificate of Non-Applicability:** Issued for a) work that is not under the jurisdiction of the Commission; b) work not visible from a public way; and c) ordinary repair or replacement of exterior architectural features that do not involve a change in design, material, or outward appearance.
- 3.) **Certificate of Hardship:** Issued when special conditions will create a substantial hardship, financial or otherwise, to the applicant if not approved, as long as the conditions are specific to the application and there would be no substantial detriment to the Historic District.

## Application Fees

**Certificate of Appropriateness:** There is a sliding scale of \$2.00 per \$1,000 of the estimated cost for the work, with a minimum fee of \$50.00.

**Certificate of Non-Applicability:** \$20.00.

**Retroactive Certificate:** The amount is three times the usual fee, with a minimum of \$150.00 for a Certificate of Applicability and \$60.00 for a Certificate of Non-Applicability.