



Design Guidelines *for Belmont Historic Districts*

Belmont Historic District Commission
Belmont Historical Commission



December 2009

Photographs in this document illustrate views of Belmont, Massachusetts.

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Introduction

The distinctive and highly desirable character of Belmont is largely due to the breadth, quantity and diversity of the town's architecture and historic properties. Throughout Massachusetts, many other cities and towns face the needless destruction of their irreplaceable historic resources, and the resulting loss of community character. In many communities, town centers, neighborhoods and downtowns are often not very well protected, and through demolitions and insensitive alterations, they can easily disappear.

The strongest form of protection is a local historic district. The benefits of local historic districts are many. Local Historic Districts have preserved the character of many areas in Massachusetts by providing: protection from demolitions and inappropriate remodeling; assurance that the historic built environment will survive for future generations to enjoy; a visual sense of the past; pride in community; and neighborhood stabilization. Historic districts do not prevent all changes from occurring, nor do they prevent all demolition,

new construction or development. The intent of a local historic district is to ensure that changes and additions are harmonious, and to prevent the intrusion of incongruous elements that might detract from the aesthetic and historic values of the district. The purpose of a local historic district is not to halt growth, but to allow for the thoughtful consideration of change.

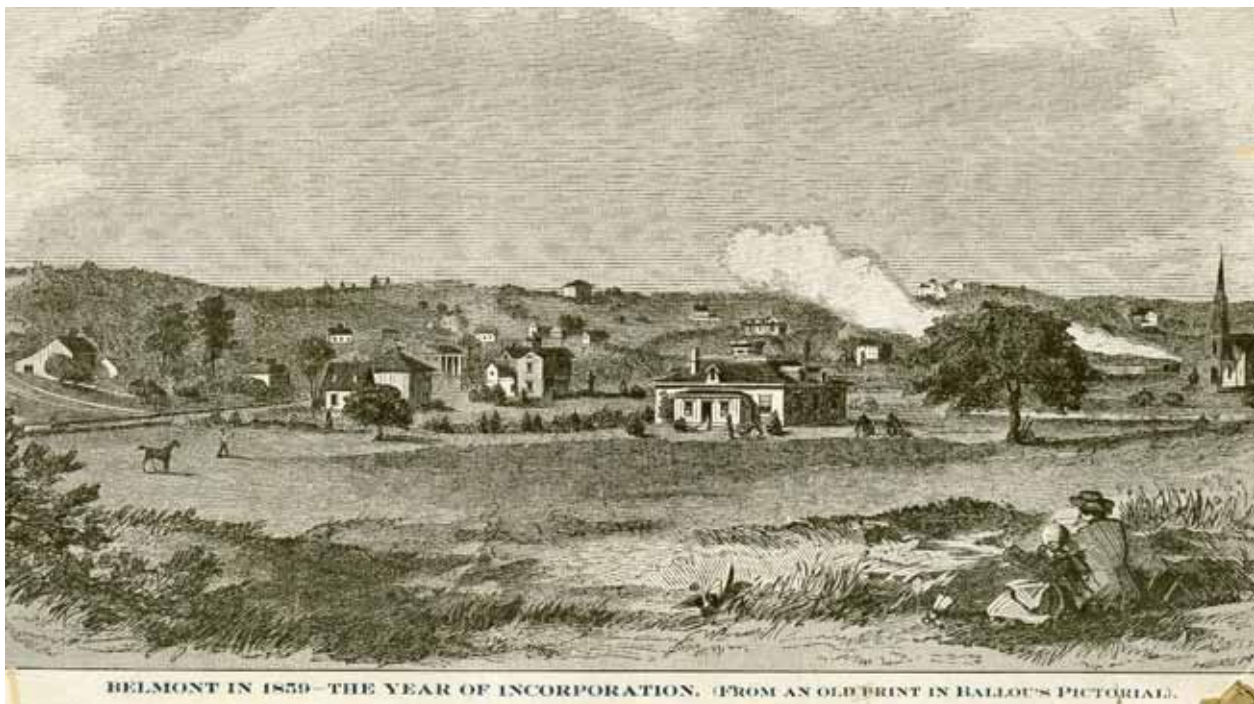
In 1968 the Belmont Historical Commission was created under Section 8D, Chapter 40 of the General Laws of Massachusetts, known as the Local Historical Commission Act that allows communities to establish historical commissions and advisory boards responsible for advising community government on all matters relating to historic preservation. In 1972 the Belmont Historic District Commission was established to implement the provisions of the Historic District Act, Chapter 40C of the General Laws of Massachusetts, which is enabling legislation allowing communities to establish local historic districts. Today, the Belmont Historic District Commission also serves as the Belmont

Historical Commission to address town-wide historic preservation issues.

Belmont's first historic district, the Wellington Historic District, initially consisted of two residences on Pleasant Street (641 and 631 Pleasant Street) and was later expanded and renamed the Pleasant Street Historic District (PHD). The PHD runs along Pleasant Street from Stella Road to Snake Hill Road, and is approximately bounded on the north by Wellington Lane and on the south by Leonard Street. The Town Hall complex of buildings at the corner of Pleasant Street and Concord Avenue is also within the PHD. The Common Street Historic District includes the stone railway bridge over Concord Avenue, the War Memorial and the Wellington Station. The selectmen appoint a ten person Commission (seven members and three alternate members) that meets monthly in advertised public hearings to review proposed changes to the houses, buildings, and landscape features in

these districts. In its role as the Belmont Historical Commission, the Belmont Historic District Commission reviews proposed changes at the following properties in town: the former Waverley Fire Station at 445 Trapelo Road and the former Central Fire Station at 54 Leonard Street.

As part of the 1999 agreement between the Town of Belmont and McLean Hospital regarding the rezoning of the McLean Hospital site, the Belmont Historic District Commission acts as a consultant to McLean Hospital when changes are proposed for the exterior of the historic buildings, the historic landscapes, and the historic landscape elements located at the McLean Hospital Campus. Also as part of this 1999 agreement, the Belmont Historic District Commission is responsible for overseeing the reuse and rehabilitation of the town-owned Brick Barn/248 Mill Street at Rock Meadow.



BELMONT IN 1859—THE YEAR OF INCORPORATION. (FROM AN OLD PRINT IN HALLOU'S PICTORIAL).

Historic engraving depicting Belmont in 1859 (courtesy the Belmont Historical Society)



Rehabilitated Waverley Fire Station (Michael Smith)

The specific design guidelines which begin on page 18 are, as their name implies, intended to guide and encourage appropriate design by applicants, foster predictability in Commission actions, and assist in facilitating a smooth review process. 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 the guidelines in most circumstances.

A resident in a historic district is required by law to seek and receive approval for any exterior alterations prior to the commencement of work. When planning alterations to a property in the district, a property owner should be prepared to apply for approval well in advance of the date they wish to begin any exterior work. It is generally more efficient to make an appointment

to informally discuss preliminary plans and seek advice from the Commission before scheduling a public hearing to formally approve or disapprove the project.



Photo © Richard Cheek

No work can commence until approval is obtained. A person commencing or completing work to the exterior of a building in a historic district without the necessary approval of the Commission is subject to legal enforcement and fines for each day the property is in violation. Under Chapter 40C of the General Laws of Massachusetts, the Middlesex Superior Court may order the removal of any building or feature constructed in violation of the Historic District Commission's rules and regulations or the restoration of any building or feature altered or demolished in violation of these provisions.¹

The Commission is not responsible for a homeowner's neglect to inquire about necessary Town permits and approval processes. Belmont's Office of Community Development will issue a building permit for construction work in a historic District once it has received a signed certificate from the Belmont Historic District Commission approving that work.

¹ See www.mass.gov/legis/laws/mgl/40c-13.htm for details.



Belmont's Historic Districts

PLEASANT STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

In the seventeenth century, Pleasant Street was a well-travelled route between Watertown and West Cambridge. It bisected large tracts of farmland belonging to early families including the Wellingtons, Frosts and Hills. These owners built farmhouses along the street, many of which still survive as symbols of Belmont's agricultural economy in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These homes include the circa 1763 Georgian style Captain Stephen Frost House (467 Pleasant Street), the 1815 Federal style Isaac Locke, Sr. House (593 Pleasant Street), and the circa 1826 Federal style Samuel O. Mead House (504 Concord Avenue). As their farms prospered, some market farmers remodelled or built larger, more elaborate residences such as the 1808 Charles Wellington House (631 Pleasant Street) which was built in the Federal style and remodelled in the Greek Revival style, and the 1841 Greek Revival style Edwin Locke House (575 Pleasant Street).

With the opening of the Wellington Station of the Fitchburg Railroad in 1843, the character of

the area began to change as Boston businessmen found the eastern slope of Belmont Hill to be an attractive site for summer retreats or year-round residences. Ambitious examples of Greek Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, and Queen Anne style houses were built on substantial lots by the educators, inventors, and artists who quickly followed them to the area. Many of these newer residents joined the farmers in supporting the incorporation of the Town of Belmont in 1859. Examples of their homes include the 1850 Greek Revival style John Locke Alexander House (592 Pleasant Street), the circa 1850 Italianate style Albert Higgins House (30 Somerset Street), the circa 1853 Second Empire style William Flagg Homer House (Belmont Woman's Club, 661 Pleasant Street) and the 1896 Queen Anne style George M. D. Sargent House (548 Pleasant Street).

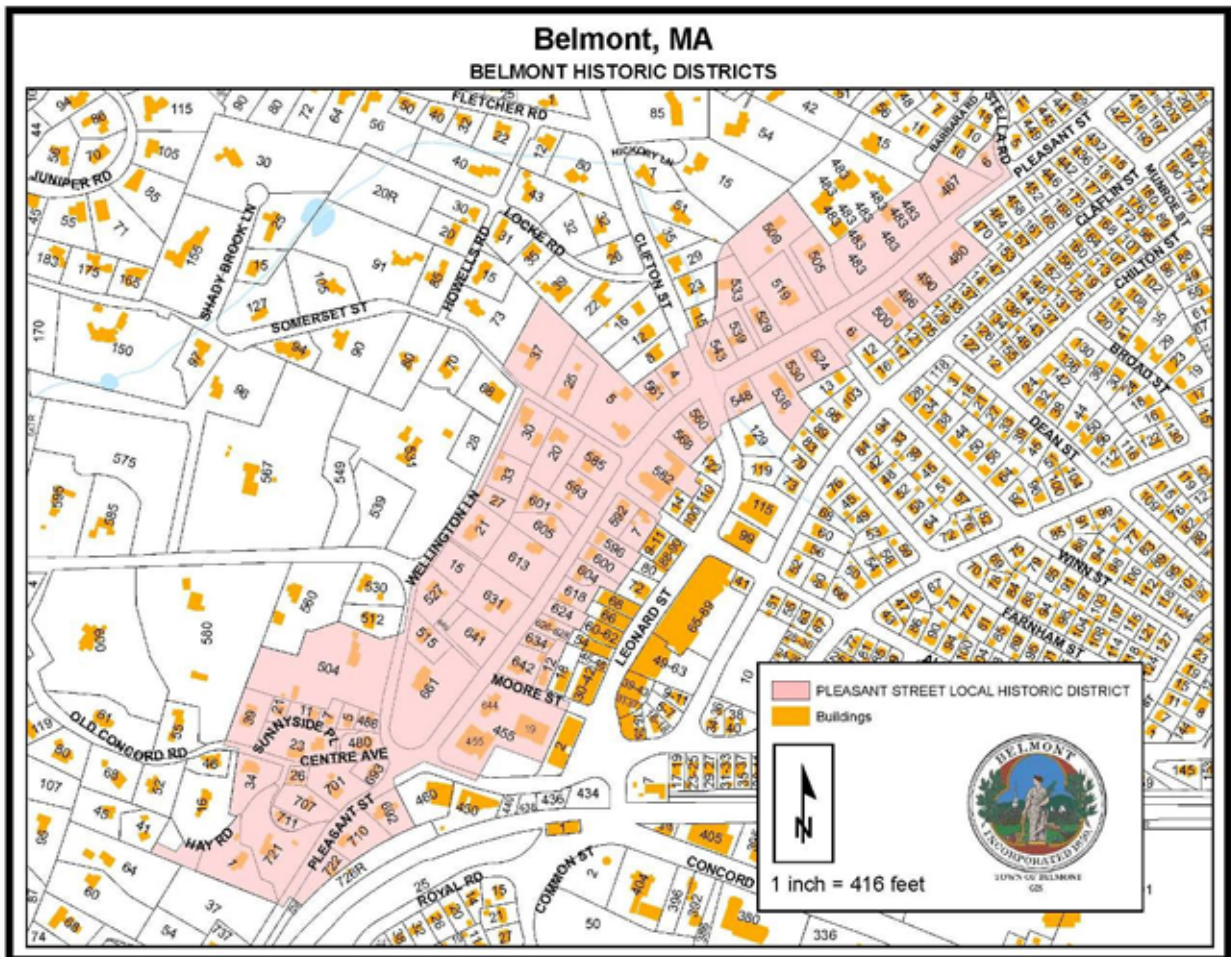
The area's appeal was enhanced in the late nineteenth century by the creation of the civic district at the Concord Avenue/Pleasant Street intersection. The Town Hall (1881-1882), High School (Homer Building/Town Hall Annex,

1898), and the Underwood Library (School Administration Building, 1902) not only provided the neighborhood with important amenities but also served as a buffer between Pleasant Street and the commercial zone along Leonard Street.

Belmont became a popular streetcar suburb of Boston soon after the creation of a trolley line from Cambridge to Waverley Square via Belmont Street and Trapelo Road in 1902, and a line to Belmont Center via Grove Street, Bright Road and Concord Avenue in 1906. As a result of this newly acquired accessibility to the

Boston/Cambridge area large tracts of Belmont farmland were subdivided into residential lots and homes built in the Colonial and Tudor Revival styles became common, including examples on Pleasant Street such as 596, 600 and 604 Pleasant Street.

Today Pleasant Street abounds with wonderful intact examples of American residential architecture from the eighteenth, nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth century illustrating changes in tastes and construction techniques over a span of three centuries.

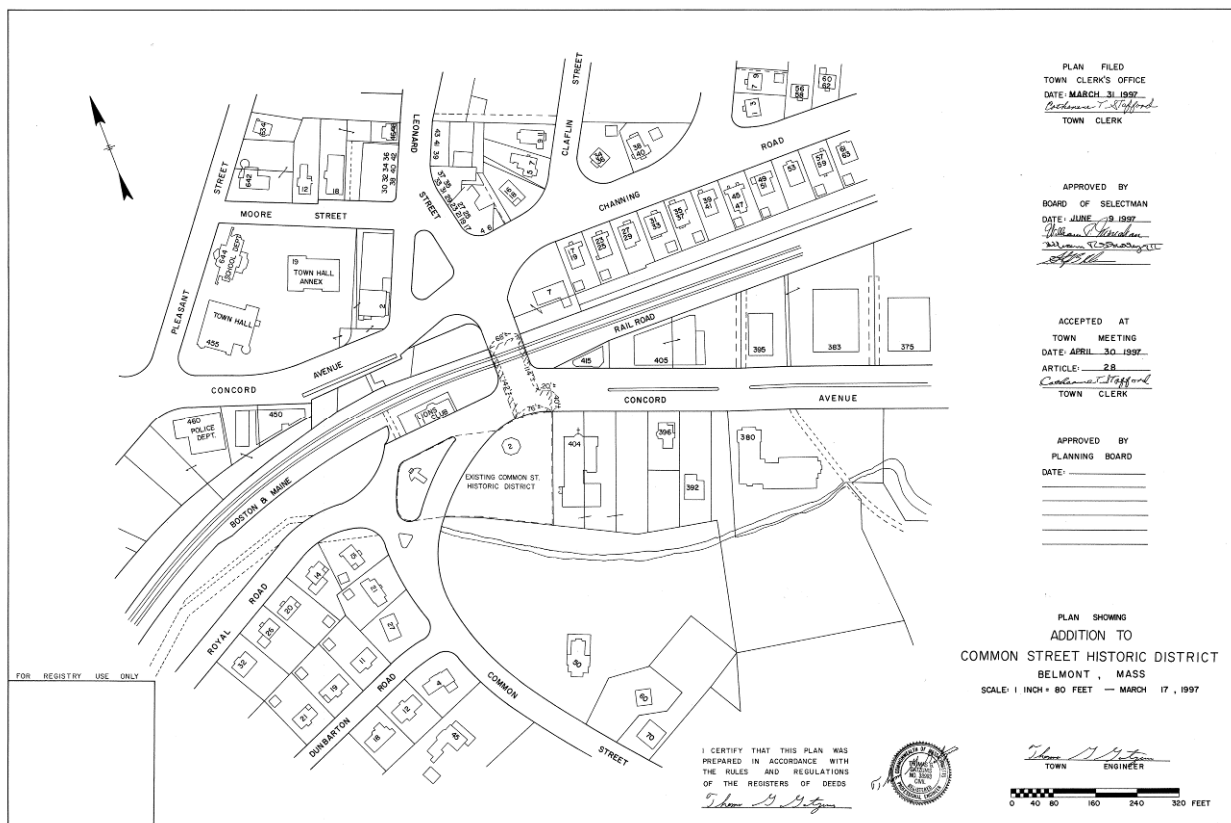


Map of the properties within the Pleasant Street Historic District. For a list of addresses, please see Appendix E (Town of Belmont)

COMMON STREET DISTRICT

In 1843 the Fitchburg Railroad was extended to Waltham by route of Wellington Hill. Three stations were established in present day Belmont including Hill's Crossing at Brighton Road, Wellington Station at the intersection of Concord Avenue and Common Street, and Plympton's Crossing at Waverley Square. The octagonal Wellington Station was built circa 1840 as a private one-room school and converted into a station in 1851 when it was acquired by the Fitchburg Railroad. This building was used as a station until a new station was constructed in 1871. The building was moved by the

Underwood Family, the original owners of the building, to their adjacent estate for use as a summer house and artist's studio from the end of the nineteenth century until 1980 when it was moved by its current owner, the Belmont Historical Society, to its present location. The stone railway bridge and Craftsman style Belmont Railroad Station were built by the Boston and Maine Railroad in 1908. The architect of these structures is unknown. The station was purchased by the Lions Club in 1956 and continues to serve as its headquarters. The Railroad Station is not within the boundary of the Common Street Historic District.



Map of the Common Street Historic District showing the updated boundaries including the War Memorial, Wellington Station and Railroad Bridge (Town of Belmont)



Wellington Station (Michael Smith)

HISTORIC ACCESSORY BUILDINGS

In 2009 Belmont adopted an amendment to its zoning by-law allowing, by Special Permit from the Planning Board, subject to review and recommendations of the Historic District Commission, home occupation or accessory dwelling unit conversion of existing historic accessory structures such as a free-standing barn, greenhouse or carriage house built before 1921, which is either:

- a) Listed on the Inventory of the Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth as maintained by the Massachusetts Historical Commission; or
- b) Listed on the National Register or State Register of Historic Places; or
- c) Specifically designated as a “Historic Accessory Building” by the Belmont Historic District Commission, using the criteria for evaluation established for determining eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places.

OTHER HISTORIC PROPERTIES UNDER BELMONT HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION/BELMONT HISTORICAL COMMISSION REVIEW

The Belmont Historic District Commission, when activated by the Board of Selectmen or other Town Committees, serves as the Belmont Historical Commission to address town-wide preservation issues. The Belmont Historical Commission is responsible for enforcing the preservation restrictions the Town of Belmont holds on properties located outside the historic districts. The Waverley Fire Station at 445 Trapelo was originally constructed as the Daniel Butler School in 1873 and later converted into a firehouse and the Waverley Branch of the Belmont Public Library in the 1930s. This building was sold with exterior preservation restrictions by the town to a developer for re-use as condominiums in 2004. Similarly, the 1899 Belmont Fire Station at 54 Leonard Street was sold with exterior preservation restrictions by the town to a developer for reuse as restaurant and office space in 2007.



Historic view of Pleasant Street, circa 1900 (courtesy Belmont Historical Society)

In 1999 an agreement was made between the Town of Belmont and McLean Hospital to ensure the preservation of the historic resources at the McLean Hospital site. Under this agreement the Belmont Historic District Commission acts as a consultant for McLean Hospital when changes are proposed to the exterior of the historic buildings, the historic landscapes, and the historic landscape elements located on the McLean Hospital campus. These include the following: Administration Building (1892-1894); Appleton House (1892-1893); Bowditch House (1894-1895); Women's Gymnasium/Centre Building (1895-1897); East House, Patient Yard and Walls (1893-1894); Laundry Building (1893-1895); Mill Street Lodge (1893-1894); North Belknap, Patient Yard and Walls (1893-1894); Power House (1893-1894); Proctor House (1893-1894); Men's Gymnasium/Recreation (1895-1897); Service Building (1893-1894); Workshops/Maintenance Group (1895); South Belknap, Patient Yard and Walls (1892-1893); Wyman House (1894-1895); Samuel Eliot Memorial Chapel (1906); South Cottage (1912); Arlington House/School (1916); Hill Cottage (1930); Oakes Building (1932); Tunnel System (1894-1895); Main Campus Roads Linking Buildings; and Main Campus Footpaths Linking Buildings (20th Century).

Also as part of the above stated agreement, the Belmont Historic District Commission is responsible for overseeing the reuse and rehabilitation of the town-owned Brick Barn/248 Mill Street (1915) at Rock Meadow.



Photo © Richard Cheek





BHDC Design Review

DESIGN REVIEW PRINCIPLES

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 the district and immediate surroundings.

When reviewing individual applications, the Commission will be guided by the Town of Belmont By-Laws, Article 15 (see Appendix D) and the following design principles, which have been adapted from the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* [1995] and its associated guidelines, including *Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* and

the Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes.

- 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 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.



DESIGN REVIEW AND APPLICATION PROCESS

A building permit for construction, alteration, or demolition of an exterior architectural feature or building within a historic district cannot be issued without one of the following certificates, discussed below:

1. Certificate of Appropriateness
2. Certificate of Hardship
3. Certificate of Non-applicability

Certificate of Appropriateness

A Certificate of Appropriateness is required for all exterior alterations visible from a public way (including so-called “private ways” if said private way is maintained by the town and/or listed as public even if posted otherwise). A certificate signed by the Commission’s Chair confirms that the Commission has found the proposed changes to be appropriate to the architectural/historic character of the building and its contextual surroundings. In general, the following items require approval from the Commission:

1. Any and all alterations or additions to the exterior of a building or structure, included but not limited to the following:
 - a. Any changes that might affect architectural details, such as doors and windows and the trim that surrounds them, porch elements, stair and balcony railings, cornice sections, belt and water courses, patterned wall and roof surfaces, decorative panels, chimney ornaments, cupolas, finials and roof cresting, etc.
 - b. The addition or insertion of decks, storm doors and windows, porch screens, window air conditioners, solar panels, antennae and similar appurtenances.
 - c. Changes in the color of paint, the color and material of roofing surfaces, and the design and material of gutters and downspouts.
2. Any construction of a new building or structure.
3. Any demolition of a structure of building or a section thereof.

4. Any reconstruction of a building, structure, or exterior architectural feature damaged or destroyed by fire, storm, or other disaster.
5. Any change in a man-made landscaping element, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. Terraces, surfaced walks and pathways, driveways, and street sidewalks.
 - b. Walls and/or fences, including paint colors.
 - c. Gazebos, pergolas, and other garden structures.
 - d. Exterior light fixtures, either attached to the house or free-standing.
 - e. Signs, which will be reviewed according to purpose, size, design, location, and lighting.

Certificate of Hardship

On a case by case basis, a Certificate of Hardship may be granted to property owners who wish to proceed with changes that the Historic District Commission deems inappropriate, but only in cases when denial would impose substantial hardship on the applicant. For example, the Commission has in the past granted such a certificate to a property owner who wished to construct new off-street parking because the applicant had no other place to park cars on the property and had been denied a permit to park overnight on the street. Approval of a Certificate of Hardship must not affect a historic district in general, must be without substantial detriment to the public welfare and must not cause departure from the intent and purposes of the Historic Districts Act. The Commission will not approve a Certificate of Hardship in instances where the hardship was self-created

(i.e. financial burden to undo work performed that had not been approved by the Commission). For further clarification of hardship, See Section 7 of the Application Process.



Certificate of Non-Applicability

A Certificate of Non-Applicability is the Commission's method of certifying that a Certificate of Appropriateness is not required for the intended work to be performed. This certificate (along with appropriate photographs, to be taken and submitted) protects the property owner from allegations that changes have been made without authorization. A Certificate of Non-Applicability shall be required for the following:

1. Additions, alterations and/or new construction that is not visible from a public way (including so-called "private ways" if said private way is maintained by the town and/or listed as public even if posted otherwise), public street, or public park. A

representative from the Commission will determine what is visible or not visible.

2. Temporary structures subject, however, to conditions pertaining to duration or use, location, lighting, removal, and similar matters as the Commission may reasonably specify.
3. The reconstruction, substantially similar in exterior design, of a building, structure, or exterior architectural feature damaged or destroyed by fire, storm, or other disaster, provided such reconstruction is begun within one year thereafter and carried forward with due diligence.
4. Ordinary maintenance, repair, or replacement of any exterior architectural feature that is damaged or worn provided that the work does not involve a change in the design, material, color, or outward appearance of the structure.

Application Process

Call or visit the Chair of the Commission to discuss the proposed alterations and to determine the category of the application (Appropriateness, Non-Applicability, or Hardship). Applications are available at the town's Office of Community Development located in the Homer Building in Belmont Center. The application form for a Certificate of Appropriateness is included in Appendix A at the end of this document. An application for a Certificate of Appropriateness or Hardship must be received at the office of the Town Administrator, Town Hall, by 3:00 p.m. at least 18 calendar days before the regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Commission (the second Tuesday of each month) in order to be placed on that month's agenda. Adjoining property owners and other property owners that may be materially affected are then given notice two

weeks in advance of the hearing. An application for a Certificate of Non-Applicability may be received at any time.

1. A complete application will consist of all proposed work items, thoroughly described on scaled drawings and shall include specifications regarding dimensions, materials, and any other information needed for the Commission to visualize the proposed changes. Applications, when appropriate, shall include a manufacturer's catalog cut of the proposed item or material. Applications for paint colors shall include a manufacturer's paint chip or color chart.

The following items should be included:

- Site Plan (if needed)
- Elevation drawings of the specific areas
- Details/profiles (i.e. moldings, cornices, fence caps, etc.)
- Materials (i.e. wood, brick, etc.)
- Dimensions (i.e. size of trim etc.)

Photographs must be provided of sufficient number and quality to adequately document existing conditions. Historic photographs, if available, (check with the Belmont Historical Society in the Claflin Room of the Belmont Public Library) shall be provided.

2. The Commission normally meets on the second Tuesday of each month in the Belmont Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. Meetings are open to the public and any person is entitled to appear and be heard on any matter before the Commission before it votes on an application. The agenda for each meeting is posted on the town's website.
3. At the hearing, the Commission will discuss the application with the applicant or his/her

representative, listen to comments from abutters or other concerned citizens, and take a vote on the application. Owners who have hired architects or contractors are urged to have them present at the hearing. An application may be continued until the next meeting if the commission deems necessary (i.e. for reasons of incomplete drawings or data, or to perform a site visit, etc.). In any case, the Commission must make a determination within 45 calendar days from the date on which the application was received, unless the applicant waives that requirement in writing.

4. No application that has been unfavorably and finally acted upon by the Belmont Historic District Commission shall be re-submitted and acted favorably upon within two years of the date of final unfavorable action unless the Commission finds, by a vote of a majority of the Commission, specific and material changes in the conditions upon which the previous unfavorable action was based, and describes such changes in the records of its proceedings after a public hearing, with notice to parties of interest.
5. A property owner or a contractor cannot receive a building permit unless a Certificate has been issued or the applicant has a letter from the Commission stating that the change involved is not subject to the Commission's jurisdiction.
6. The Town of Belmont building inspector and/or a member of the Historic District Commission reserves the right to inspect the project to certify compliance with the conditions set forth in the Certificate issued.
7. If a property owner applies for a Certificate of Hardship, a public hearing concerning

the application must be held and notice to abutters given in the same manner as described above. The Historic District Commission may solicit expert testimony or require that the applicant for the Certificate of Hardship make submissions concerning any or all of the following before it makes a determination on the application:

- a. Estimate the cost of the proposed construction, alteration, demolition, or removal and provide an estimate of any additional cost that would be incurred to comply with the recommendations of the Historic District Commission for changes necessary for the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness;
- b. A report from a licensed engineer or architect with experience in rehabilitation as to the structural soundness of any structures on the property and their suitability for rehabilitation;
- c. Estimated market value of the property in its current condition; after completion of the proposed construction, alteration, demolition or removal; after any changes recommended by the Historic Districts Commission; and in the case of a proposed demolition, after renovation of the existing property for continued use;
- d. In the case of a proposed demolition, an estimate from an architect, developer, real estate consultant, appraiser, or other real estate professional experienced in rehabilitation as to the economic feasibility of rehabilitation or reuse of the existing structure on the property;

- e. All appraisals obtained within the previous two years by the owner or applicant in connection with the purchase, financing, or ownership of the property;
- f. Assessed value of the property according to the two most recent assessments;
- g. Form of ownership or operation of the property, whether sole proprietorship, for-profit or not-for-profit corporation, limited partnership, joint venture, or other;
- h. Any other information considered necessary by the Historic District Commission to make a determination as to whether the property does yield or may yield a reasonable return to the owners.

The Commission shall review all the evidence and information required of an applicant for a Certificate of Hardship and make a determination within forty-five (45) calendar days of receipt of the application whether the denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness would deprive the owner of the property of reasonable use of, or economic return on, the property. For specific standards for passing on applications of this type, please see:

www.town.belmont.ma.us/Public_Documents/BelmontMA_Bcomm/hdcoverview.

Written notice of the determination shall be provided to the applicant and the Office of Community Development within ten (10) calendar days following the determination and shall be accompanied by a Certificate of Hardship, if approved.

A Certificate of Hardship shall also be issued in the event that the Commission does not make a determination on the application within 45 calendar days after the public hearing is held.



1904 historic view of the Belmont Town Hall (courtesy Belmont Historical Society)



Belmont Town Hall (photo © Richard Cheek)



General Guidelines

INTRODUCTION

These general guidelines are intended to encourage appropriate design by applicants, foster predictability in Commission actions, and assist in facilitating a smooth review process. While the guidelines apply to all properties within the designated historic districts and other properties for which the Commission has review authority, some properties have greater architectural or historical significance and therefore warrant a more focused review by the Commission.



*1898 photograph of the Homer Building construction
(courtesy Belmont Historical Society)*

BUILDING EXTERIOR: Paint



Paint and stain colors are associated with particular architectural styles and periods, and reflect settlement patterns and development in specific geographical locations. The BHDC uses and approves colors from the palette of historical colors developed by Historic New England (formerly the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities/SPNEA), or a comparable alternative. The palette is available on loan from the BHDC or for purchase from Historic New England's website

www.historicnewengland.org.

The Commission is available on an informal basis to discuss period colors or to advise on possible color choices.

A hearing before the Commission is not required to repaint a building or structure the same (existing) color. Color chips, however, must be submitted, and will be approved or disapproved in writing.

A hearing before the Commission is required to change the color of the building, structure, trim and detail elements. A written record of the appropriate color choice(s), along with sample paint chips, must be submitted for the file. If it is determined at the hearing that the colors are proximate to those on the Approved List and appropriate for the structure given its architectural style, the owner will be informed

in writing. Any other color choices require review and approval by the Commission.

General guidelines for exterior paint are:

- Color compatibility with adjacent structures should promote visual harmony of the streetscape. Compatible colors rather than repetition are the goal as several houses with identical color schemes in one area may not be appropriate.
- Because exterior color is an important element of a building's period and style, it should reflect a balance of authenticity and personal taste.
- In some instances, the choice of a period color should be based on the dominant style of the building rather than on its actual age.

- Property owners may retain an existing color, keeping in mind that it may be inappropriate to the period of the building; or they may select a new color from the Approved List or an acceptable compatible alternative.
- Removing paint using heat guns/plates and/or power-washing is not recommended and should be avoided to prevent fire and damage to the architectural elements.



Underwood Pool (photo © Richard Cheek)

BUILDING EXTERIOR: Masonry



Exterior masonry generally consists of stone, brick, concrete block, stucco, and plasterwork and associated mortars. Masonry construction includes structures with masonry bearing walls or veneer. Masonry materials are also used in foundations, discussed below as well as in chimneys (see Roofs) and in the landscape as retaining walls, property defining walls, and as decorative or space defining features; these features are often patterned (see Building Exterior: Site below). Several NPS Preservation Briefs provide additional guidance related to historic masonry (see Sources).

General design guidelines for exterior masonry are:

- Masonry features that are important in defining the building's overall character should be identified, retained and preserved. Such elements include but are not limited to walls, cornices, hoodmolds, columns, door pediments, joints and bonding patterns.
- Character-defining masonry elements should be repaired rather than replaced. If replacement becomes necessary, the original should be replicated, matching the original design and materials as closely as possible.
- To prevent water penetration, masonry buildings should be carefully maintained to avoid costly damage resulting from water freezing inside the walls or destructive chemical reactions.
- Painting previously unpainted masonry structures or applying stucco and concrete veneers to previously uncoated structures is not appropriate and will not be approved. Similarly, removing paint from a masonry building that has been historically painted is not appropriate.
- Masonry should only be cleaned to arrest deterioration or to remove severe soiling. If cleaning is absolutely necessary, the gentlest methods possible should be used, such as low-pressure water with soft bristle brushes and mild detergents. Abrasive cleaning techniques such as sandblasting or strong chemical solutions are not appropriate and will not be approved. High-pressure washing is not an appropriate cleaning method because it can force water into the wall and cause deterioration to both the masonry and the mortar joints. All non-masonry surfaces should be protected prior to cleaning.

- If there is evidence of mortar deterioration, re-pointing may be necessary. Care should be taken to match the original color, material, composition, pattern and size and profile of the existing mortar joint. Hand tools should be used to remove damaged mortar; power tools often damage surrounding masonry so their use will not be approved.
- Existing stucco should be repaired with a stucco mix that duplicates the original in appearance – surface color and texture.
- Modern, man-made masonry materials are discouraged.



Photo © Richard Cheek

Mortar Pointing

- Unless the original mortar contained a high Portland cement content, its use should otherwise be avoided. Buildings constructed prior to 1880 did not use Portland cement. When re-pointing becomes necessary, the new mortar should be lime-based. Exact color can be achieved with the use of aggregate and pigment.

Foundations

- In new construction, foundation height should be consistent with those typically found in other buildings of the same architectural style. Ideally, new foundations should also be in harmony with foundation heights of buildings in the surrounding area. The foundation height of an addition should match that of the existing structure.
- Foundations should be left unpainted. New foundation construction should be compatible with the original, but be distinctly different in material, pattern or size.



BUILDING EXTERIOR: Wood



Exterior wood most often includes features such as siding, shingles, trim, molding and shutters. Wood is also often used as cornices/fascia (see Roofs); on entryways, stairs and porches (see Entrances and Porches), and in the landscape as fences, arbors, pergolas and other decorative features (see Site).

General design guidelines for exterior wood walls and trim are:

- Original wood siding material should be retained whenever possible; deteriorated sections should be repaired or replaced with new material that duplicates the original as closely as possible. Vinyl and metal siding are not appropriate and will not be approved.
- All existing shutters and their hardware should be retained and preserved. Damaged shutters often can be repaired by selective replacement of deteriorated pieces. If replacement becomes necessary, replacement shutters should match the originals in terms of size, scale, detail, thickness and hardware. Aluminum and vinyl shutters are not appropriate and will not be approved. Removing existing shutters alters the building's appearance and will not be approved. Installation of shutters in locations where they did not exist historically is inappropriate and will not be approved.
- Composite or other artificial materials are generally not acceptable replacements for original wood. As new materials are developed that are indistinguishable from natural or traditional products, the Commission will consider their use on a case-by-case basis.

BUILDING EXTERIOR: Roofs



Roofs are a significant, character-defining feature of historic buildings and they are essential in defining building style, period and form. For this reason, retaining and preserving original roofs is important to maintaining a building's historic character, so they should not be altered or obscured. In Belmont, roofs come in a wide variety of forms – front and end (side) gable roof and single-slope shed roof forms are the most common, but hipped, mansard and other varieties are also found.

As complete features, roofs include a number of distinctive elements including cornices, dormers, chimneys, gutters and downspouts. Exterior skylights are also addressed in this section.

General design guidelines for roofs are:

Alterations and Penetrations

- Alterations that radically change, damage or destroy the roof's defining historic characteristics are not appropriate. New additions such as skylights, antennas or mechanical equipment should be installed in such a manner as to not be visible, or at least screened from the pedestrian view. (See Skylights below)

Decorative Features on Roofs

- Functional and decorative features should be preserved in form, size, pattern and materials. This includes features such as cupolas, cresting, finials, dormers, chimneys and weathervanes.

Roof Repair or Replacement

- Repairs to roofs should include limited replacement in-kind, or with a compatible substitute material, of those extensively deteriorated or missing parts of features (if surviving features exist).
- If roof replacement is necessary, the same materials as the original, or a compatible substitute material, should be used. The replacement roof should match the original composition, size, shape, color, decorative patterning, and texture of the original.
- Wood shingles are an appropriate roofing material only if there is pictorial, historical or architectural evidence that they were once in use on the historic building, and if they were typical of a particular style. Otherwise, their use is not appropriate.

Cornices

A cornice is a projecting horizontal band or molding between floors or at the top of a

building that helps to protect the windows and walls below from water drips. It is usually designed as part of the parapet to emphasize the roofline or upper silhouette of the building.

- Intact cornices should be preserved. Their architectural detailing should be repaired rather than replaced.
- Removing all or part of a projecting cornice is inappropriate, as is covering or obscuring the cornice in any manner.
- If a cornice is missing or replacement becomes necessary, the replacement should be based on historical, pictorial or physical evidence. If no such evidence exists, the cornice should be a contemporary design incorporating compatible materials.



Dormers

- Alterations to existing historic dormers should preserve the existing form, character, size and material of the architectural feature.

- If new dormers are proposed, they should be located on rear and side facing slopes of the roof and not visible from the public way (including so-called “private ways” if said private way is maintained by the town and/or listed as public even if posted otherwise). New dormers should be compatible with the existing character of the building.



Chimneys

- Chimneys are distinctive roof features and should be retained in most cases. Chimneys should not be altered, shortened, or removed, but rather, repaired as necessary.
- When repointing or rebuilding an existing chimney the owner should reuse the existing brick if possible, or find a closely matching replacement. The chimney should be built to its original height and any corbelling or other decorative features should be retained.
- Caps, if necessary, should be made of appropriate material and size. Metal caps, pipe extensions, etc. should be avoided. “Metal cage” type caps are generally not approved.

Gutters and Downspouts

Wooden or copper gutters and downspouts can be important architectural features. In older houses or buildings, they were often designed as part of the eave moldings. In these cases, the gutters become particularly important architectural features and should be treated as such.

- Gutters that are integral components of the building eave should be properly maintained and only replaced in cases of irreparable deterioration. Replacements should match the original in form, design, and material, or be made of a suitable substitute material.
- More discretion may be allowed in the case of hung gutters. The architectural value of the gutters must still play a role in the decision-making process, but the cost differential between different materials and the environmental implications may also be taken into account.
- New gutters and downspouts should be placed in an architecturally sensitive manner and painted the color of the surface on which they are installed; e.g., if a downspout runs down a white corner board, it should be painted white. Painting of copper gutters and downspouts will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- Removing trim pieces from the roof line in order to more easily attach gutters is generally not permitted.
- Copper gutters are encouraged by the BHDC because they are more durable and retain their shape. Copper may be used as a replacement for wooden gutters if they faithfully duplicate the molding profile of the original.

Skylights

The Commission does not look favorably on the addition of skylights. The creation of living spaces in areas not originally intended as such is not considered justification for destruction of the architectural integrity of an existing roof by the installation of a skylight.

- Bubble, faceted or dome skylights are not appropriate and should be avoided if visible on character-defining elevations.

If the homeowner can establish that a particular skylight is appropriate to the architectural style of the building, the Commission may consider such an application. Skylights may also be approved for roofs that are not visible from a public way (including so-called “private ways” if said private way is maintained by the town and/or listed as public even if posted otherwise). Approval must be obtained, however, by confirmation by the Commission that it will indeed not be visible.

- On non-character-defining elevations, flat, sloped glazed skylights may be approved on a case-by-case basis. During the review process, color and surrounding molding will also be reviewed.

If it is possible to document (through photographs or site inspection by a representative of the Commission) the prior existence of a skylight, the Commission may consider its restoration.

- Restoration of missing skylights requires that the new skylight be the same or as close as possible to the original in size and location.

BUILDING EXTERIOR: Windows



Windows are an important aspect of the architectural character of most historic buildings. A variety of different window types and configurations are found throughout the Historic Districts. Double-hung windows (windows having two vertically sliding sashes) are common in Belmont. Their design, craftsmanship, and other qualities generally make them worthy of preservation.

The functional and decorative features of windows that help define the building's historic character should be identified, retained and preserved. These features include but are not limited to frames, sash, muntins, glazing, sills, heads, hoodmolds, lintels, and paneled or decorated jambs and moldings. Deteriorated elements that cannot be salvaged can be selectively repaired. If the element is deteriorated beyond repair, it can be selectively replaced. If decorative elements are missing, those elements should not be recreated unless strong pictorial, historical or physical documentation exists.

Sometimes a homeowner will request the replacement of old wood windows with the idea that it is the only way to save energy. However, window repairs using existing sash can achieve performance ratings indistinguishable from replacement sash. If the windows have single glazing, it is worthwhile considering installing storm windows. Retrofitting original window

sash with weather-stripping can contribute to energy savings.

General guidelines for the treatment of windows are:

- Original window sash and related trim should be retained and repaired except in cases where they are beyond repair. The complete replacement of all windows in a building in which only a few are in disrepair will not generally be approved. (Windows that are not original to the structure may still be important to retain but will be reviewed on a case by case basis).
- Original historic glass should be retained wherever possible.
- The use of mirrored or tinted glass is not appropriate and is to be avoided.
- If replacement becomes necessary due to severe deterioration, the windows should

duplicate the existing material, design, configuration and hardware. Replacement windows should match the original window characteristics. This includes characteristics such as the number and size of divided window panes, size and configuration of sash and muntins, etc.



Storm Windows

The use of exterior storm windows should be considered because they are thermally efficient, cost effective, reversible, and allow the retention of existing windows. Storm windows will require a Certificate of Appropriateness for the initial installation. Although interior storm windows appear to offer an attractive option for achieving double-glazing with minimal visual impact from the exterior, the potential for damage due to condensation problems must be addressed.

- Storm windows should match the color of the windows or house trim or be painted to match.

- The use of unfinished aluminum should be avoided. Aluminum midrails should match the height of the meeting rails of the historic sash.

Transoms

Transoms are defined as a window located above a door; transoms are usually made of glass.

- Transoms and their associated trim and dressing should be repaired rather than replaced.
- Replacements should be consistent with existing transom windows.
- Transoms should not be covered or filled. Removing the transom and filling it with masonry, glass block or other material is not appropriate.
- If the transom glass requires replacement, a clear pane of glass should be installed. Depending on the style of the building and when it was constructed, the use of stained glass might not be appropriate and might not be approved.



BUILDING EXTERIOR: Entrances and Porches



Entrances and porches are quite often the focus of historic buildings, particularly when they occur on primary elevations. Together with their functional and decorative features such as doors, steps, balustrades, pilasters, and entablatures, they can be extremely important in defining the overall architectural style and historic character of a building. Their retention, protection and repair should always be carefully considered.

Entrances also include doors or doorways and their associated features (sidelights, fanlights, moldings, hardware, canopies, and transoms). Balconies and decks are also addressed in this section.

Guidelines for doors, entrances and porches are:

Doors

- Existing original or later appropriate replacement doors should be retained and repaired wherever possible, including their associated features. The enlargement or reduction of historical or original door openings to fit new stock door sizes is not permitted.
- Original doors and hardware should not be discarded when they can be repaired and reused in place.
- If replacement doors are necessary, the replacements should duplicate the original in material, design, and hardware of the older or original doors.
- Residential doors should be made of wood (unless another material was used originally). Oak, pine and fir are most commonly used for exterior doors. Metal or composite doors on houses are not acceptable unless they are original to the building's design or construction.
- If a replacement doorway is necessary, it should harmonize with the style of the house in type and extent of detail. For example, replacement doors should have the appropriate panel arrangement for the date of the building's construction.
- New door openings should not be introduced into the principal or front elevation. The appropriateness of a new side or rear door depends on their design and visibility from a public view and will require approval.

Storm Doors

Weather stripping is encouraged to preserve this architecturally significant aspect of a property without a storm door. However, consideration will be given to installation of storm doors that do not detract from the historic character of existing doors and doorways. Storm doors are available that consist almost completely of glass which would block very little of the historic door. Storm doors marketed as “Colonial” with a crossbuck on the bottom half and a scalloped frame around the upper window are not appropriate to historic houses.

- Storm doors may be wood or aluminum; if using aluminum, the frames should be painted to match the trim or the door color.



Entrances, Porticos and Porches

- Original designs, or later designs that contribute to the historic appearance of the structure, should be retained to the extent possible.

- Deteriorated elements should be repaired or replaced in kind, where necessary, with materials and elements that duplicate the original as closely as possible.
- New entrances, porticos or porches should be consistent with the period, style and materials of the building. Drawings of the new design must be provided and approved.
- Enclosing porches and steps so as to modify their original appearance (e.g. as habitable space) is discouraged.

Steps, Stairways, Railings

Steps, stairs, and railings are important features of entryways and porches.

- Where possible, original features, detailing and spatial relationships should be retained or repaired in the same design and material.
- Drawings of new design must be provided to and approved by the Historic District Commission and ultimately, the Building Department.



SITE: Landscape Features



All buildings are located on a parcel of land, called the site, which contributes to the overall character of the historic property. The relationship between buildings and landscape features within the site should always be considered in any improvement project. In some instances, the landscape associated with a given historic building may have significance in its own right.

As with architecture, landscapes may have certain elements or features that are “character-defining,” and which contribute to both the appearance and significance of the property. They are composed of natural and man-made elements, which have been selected and manipulated over time by property owners and the environment. Landscape features include topography, vegetation, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, walls and fences, site furnishings and lighting, and decorative objects.



Photo © Richard Cheek

Landscape Features Subject to BHDC Review

Fences and Walls

Fences and walls are used to define boundaries, screen or enclose a portion of a property, or provide decorative interest. Wooden and iron fences and fieldstone, brick and masonry boundary walls or planted hedges are common features throughout the Historic Districts and they recall the agricultural past of Belmont. Traditionally, property demarcations were minimal with fences and walls located along a public or private way in front of houses and kept open and low.

Erection of any new fences or walls within the historic districts visible from the a public way (including so-called “private ways” if said private way is maintained by the town and/or listed as public even if posted otherwise) must be approved by the Historic District Commission through a formal submission of a plan and appearance before the Commission at one of its regularly scheduled meetings, with

abutters notified. Front or side yard fences or walls that impede clear vision at intersections or driveways sacrifice safety as well as historical appropriateness and could additionally come under the jurisdiction of the Community Development Department, the Department of Public Works, and the Traffic Committee. Paint colors of new and existing fences and walls must be approved by the Commission, just as for houses.

Fences and walls must be compatible with the style and materials that are present already in Belmont and appropriate to the houses they surround as follows:

- Existing, original fences and walls shall be preserved.
- Replacement fences or walls, including new construction or alterations shall be appropriate in design, materials, construction and assembly to the original period of the house.
- New fences and walls should not prevent or restrict views of buildings from a public way (including so-called “private ways” if said private way is maintained by the town and/or listed as public even if posted otherwise). New front yard fences and the front yard portion of side fences should be open in character so as not to create visual barriers.
- Chain-link and woven wire fences are discouraged in the Historic Districts.
- Fences made from any polymeric materials (cast, molded or extruded plastics, recycled plastics, vinyl), even including picket, stockade or rail styles as well as web or mesh styles, are likewise not permitted for fences viewable from any public way

(including so-called “private ways” if said private way is maintained by the town and/or listed as public even if posted otherwise).



Photo © Richard Cheek

- Ornamental cast or wrought iron fences are appropriate in many cases. Baluster spacing must conform to established building codes and standards. Fence detailing must be in keeping with the period and style of the house and architectural features of neighboring properties. For example, an ornate design appropriate to a New Orleans balcony is not appropriate to a Victorian Italianate or Colonial Revival house in New England. Aluminum imitations of cast or wrought iron fences may be appropriate if the design is acceptable and the aluminum is painted or anodized to disguise the base metal. These must be reviewed by the HDC.

- Wooden fences in a front yard should remain permeable to view. Picket and balustraded wooden fence designs should reflect the style, period and character of the house and neighboring fences. Rail fences are appropriate in some settings with more rural character, but not in others where more formal architectural features dominate. In general, front-yard wooden fences should be painted, rather than left natural or stained, and the paint color must be approved by the Commission, just as for house colors.

Block Walls

- Walls constructed of concrete block systems are not historically appropriate when visible from the public way (including so-called “private ways” if said private way is maintained by the town and/or listed as public even if posted otherwise). These systems, when used in other places partially visible must be reviewed by the HDC.

Brick Walls

- Brick walls are often appropriate but should conform to the guidelines for coursework styles, pointing and coping as outlined in the Masonry section of these guidelines. Brick walls may be topped by brick coping or with granite or bluestone. Variegated bricks should not be used except to match those in an existing wall.



Stone Walls

Belmont, like most neighboring communities, is full of stone walls; many erected one or even two centuries ago to mark field boundaries and public or private ways, or to retain slopes in this hilly community. These historic walls reflect a variety of styles, some with coping, some without; some dry-laid, some mortared with cement; some of large boulders, some with smaller stones, with or without in-fill “chinks,” and some using rounded fieldstones, while others were made using a squarer cut ashlar stone.

- Existing stone walls should be maintained in the same materials and not replaced.
- Natural local stone materials (native fieldstone, quarried granite) are more appropriate than contemporary materials (concrete, uniformly cut or processed stone) for construction of new walls. Walls may be dry-laid or cemented, but in cemented walls efforts should be made to minimize the amount of mortar or grout visible in construction.
- Original concrete retaining walls exist in the Historic Districts and they should be maintained and repaired, rather than replaced.
- Walls can be topped by cap stones or coping, often of granite or limestone, which should reflect what was historically appropriate for the particular site. The wall tops may be capped by large interlocked fieldstones where the mortar is barely visible or by smaller fieldstones with mortar inserts. Alternatively, wrought iron fencing may be inserted into the wall top. The HDC must review these alternatives to ensure an appropriateness of scale, style and materials.

Wooden Walls

- Wooden railroad ties may be used as retaining walls, but not within the viewshed from a public way (including so-called “private ways” if said private way is maintained by the town and/or listed as public even if posted otherwise).

Gates

Gates through fences and walls are architectural features that are subject to the same scrutiny as doors or windows of houses.

- The design and construction of gates should continue or complement that of the fence or wall through which they provide access.
- Plastic or unpainted aluminum gates are not appropriate.

Parking and Paving

Belmont has an overnight on-street parking ban so virtually all Belmont houses must have provisions for on-site parking. Expansion, alteration and resurfacing of existing parking areas are within the purview of the Historic District Commission in cases where driveways or parking spaces are in public view.

- Existing driveway alignments should be retained and preserved.
- Alterations to existing historic driveways should strive to preserve green space and minimize non-permeable surfaces to the greatest extent possible.
- Paving materials should be visually compatible and appropriate to the character of the property. A variety of preferred paving materials include packed gravel, stone dust, poured concrete with or without an aggregate additive, and pavers made of brick, granite or concrete. Of these, the permeable choices such as gravel and stone

dust are more difficult to maintain because the surface can migrate, and they are more challenging to plow in winter. Some paver designs are perforated to permit water infiltration and grass growth that can effectively disguise the driveway or parking space if properly maintained. Concrete can also be tinted to reduce its bright appearance.

- In most cases, black-topping with asphalt is not the most appropriate paving. When resurfacing existing bituminous concrete (asphalt) surfaces, gravel or pea-stone should be rolled into the hot surface to minimize the appearance of a large expanse of asphaltic material.
- Re-aligning or expanding parking areas should consider the effect on existing landscape features and spaces such as walls and fences, gardens and trees. Inserting a gate in a fence section is preferable to destroying or relocating a whole section of existing fence.
- Parking areas should strive to screen views of the cars from the house and from the public way (including so-called “private ways” if said private way is maintained by the town and/or listed as public even if posted otherwise). The front of houses should not be used for vehicle storage.



Walks and Paths

- Dry-laid brick, bluestone, granite, fieldstone or crushed stone are the most appropriate choices for associated walks and paths.
- In some settings, concrete or bituminous concrete (asphalt) is an acceptable walkway or path material in historic districts.



Site Furniture

Site furniture includes seating, lighting, trash and recycling containers, planters, public telephone areas, enclosures, information signs, drinking fountains, clocks, bike racks, and similar site furnishings.

- Site furniture should complement the architectural style and period of the associated historic building and its setting. Seating should be made of natural materials that can withstand weather, such as wood and stone.
- Site furniture should be placed so as not to detract from its immediate environs or larger streetscape.
- No advertising should appear on any exterior surface.



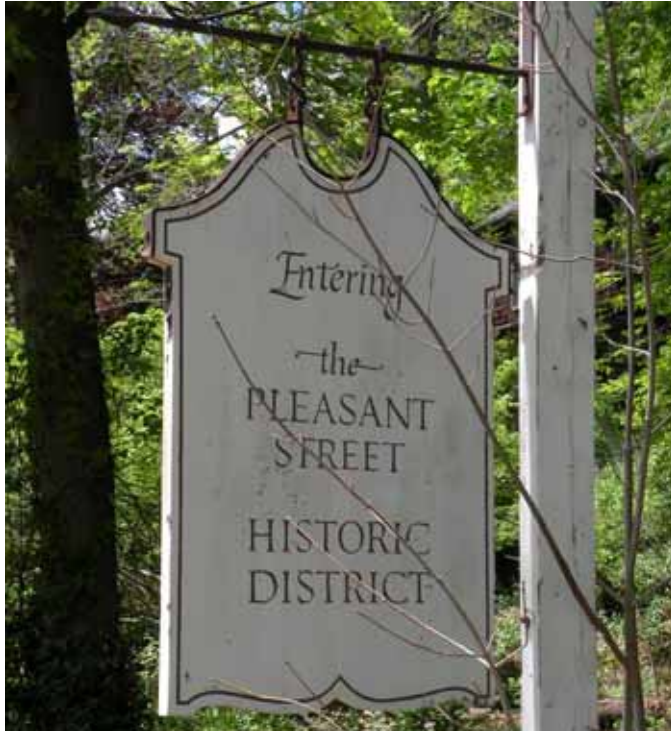
Vegetation

The HDC does not have jurisdiction over plantings, except for street trees and other vegetation located in the public right of way, such as along Pleasant Street. However, historic homeowners are encouraged to consult historic landscape references when contemplating landscape changes, and make plant and design choices that suit the architectural style of the property.

Lighting

The style and materials of light fixtures visible from a public way (including so-called “private ways” if said private way is maintained by the town and/or listed as public even if posted otherwise) should be appropriate to the historic character of the district and the historic building to which it is attached. If possible, consideration should be given to concealing the lighting source with landscape elements.

SITE: Setting



Landscape setting is the area or environment in which a historic property is found, such as a residential neighborhood or historic district. The elements of setting, such as the relationship between buildings, yards, setbacks, views, walls and fences, walkways and street trees together define the character of the district or neighborhood. For this reason, alterations to individual historic properties should consider both the affect on subject property as well as the potential impact on its setting.

General guidelines for setting are:

- The historic relationship between buildings and landscape features shall be retained, such as the houses, roads, walks and street trees that together define the spatial character of the district.
- Landscape features that define the public view of the district shall be retained, including walls and fences and other features.
- The construction of new additions, ancillary structures, driveways, parking areas, landscape structures, or other features shall respect the existing spatial relationships within the district, so that the relationships between building, landscape, and setting are retained.
- The addition of new landscape features along the public viewshed shall be compatible with the scale, materials, massing and other characteristics of the setting; individual features shall also be compatible with the scale, material, massing and architectural style and period of the associated building.



Photo © Richard Cheek

ACCESSORY STRUCTURES



Accessory structures include garages, barns, sheds, greenhouses, gazebos, playhouses, and similar structures, either with or without permanent foundations, and are subject to approval if they are visible from a public way (including so-called “private ways” if said private way is maintained by the town and/or listed as public even if posted otherwise) within a historic district. Many 18th and 19th century homes have barns and other accessory structures, serving as reminders of the town’s rich agricultural heritage. Where these buildings exist, the HDC strongly encourages their continued maintenance and protection.

General guidelines for accessory structures are:

- Existing accessory structures that are historically significant should be retained and preserved.
- Visually filling a site with dwelling and multiple accessory structures detracts from the historic streetscape and is not appropriate.
- In determining appropriateness, the Commission considers the size, scale and placement of accessory structures, as well as their relationship to lot size and other structures, and their visual and physical relationship to adjacent or nearby lots (setting).
- Refer to the Belmont Zoning By-Law for Historic Accessory Building Preservation permitting home occupation and accessory dwelling unit conversions of historic accessory structures.
- Play sets that include enclosures are also subject to the same review as accessory structures.

ENERGY CONSERVATION and MODERN EQUIPMENT



Modern equipment consists of utility and other mechanical equipment located outside a building and visible from a public way (including so-called “private ways” if said private way is maintained by the town and/or listed as public even if posted otherwise), including but not limited to, antennas, cellular towers, satellite dishes, propane and other tanks, dumpsters, utility meters, alarm systems, HVAC equipment (including air conditioners, heating units, ducts, fans), and solar collectors/panels and their associated mounting devices, strapping, fasteners, cables, and related equipment.

General Guidelines

- Modern equipment should, in general, be as small and inconspicuous as possible.
- All modern equipment should be installed in locations that create the least disturbance to the historic appearance of the building, involve the least additional structural alterations and are screened, hidden or otherwise shielded from public view to the greatest extent possible.
- Modern equipment placed on the ground should be sited in the rear of the building and may be screened by vegetation, walls or fences. Front yard locations are strongly discouraged.
- If modern equipment is mounted on a roof, it should be located behind chimneys, sloped roofs and parapets or placed in the central portion of flat roofs behind sight lines as seen from ground level or other portions of the roof not visible from any public way (including so-called “private ways” if said private way is maintained by the town and/or listed as public even if posted otherwise). Flues and vents should be concealed in chimneys or cupolas.
- Modern equipment should be painted to blend in with the building and surroundings. Window air-conditioning mounting equipment should be painted the same color as the window trim. Vents should be painted to match the color of the surface on which they are installed.

- Seasonally installed air-conditioning units do not require a Certificate of Appropriateness, but the Commission encourages discreet placement out of view of a public way (including so-called “private ways” if said private way is maintained by the town and/or listed as public even if posted otherwise) whenever possible.

Utilities

- Utilities should be underground, where possible. Electrical wires and other cables should be placed as discretely as possible, away from the public view.

Solar Panels

A Certificate of Appropriateness is required for all solar panel installations within a historic District visible from a public way (including so-called “private ways” if said private way is

maintained by the town and/or listed as public even if posted otherwise) or place. The Commission will consider a building’s importance, prominence and historic significance, visual impact and glare.

- Installation of solar collectors shall not permanently change any architectural feature. A minimum of 2 feet of roof surface should be visible surrounding the collector array. Framing, piping insulation, etc. should match the roof surface. Collectors should be mounted to match the roof slope (parallel to roof and no more than 3 inches above the roof surface). Piping should be concealed from view.

Miscellaneous

- Free-standing or attached basketball hoops are not subject to BHDC review.



DEMOLITION and REMOVAL



There is a presumption that all existing buildings and structures in the district will be preserved. Demolition or removal of a building or structure or portion thereof located in a historic district (whether or not the structure is visible to the public) requires a demolition or removal permit from the Commission (refer to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40C). In general, rehabilitation (renovation) or replacement in kind is preferred to the demolition of all or a portion of a historic structure.

- The Commission will issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition only if the building proposed for demolition has no historic architectural significance or if the Board of Health or Building Inspector has ordered the structure to be demolished in accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws or the state building code.
- Documentation of a building or structure proposed to be demolished may be required, including elevations, details of specific notable features, through measured drawings and photographs, in accordance with procedures established by the Historic American Building Survey (HABS).



15 Lawndale Street (also above) prior to demolition, 2009 (Michael Smith)



1875 view of the original Belmont Estate, razed in 1927 (courtesy Belmont Historical Society)

NEW ADDITIONS



Additions to structures and construction of new buildings visible from a public way require approval from the Historic District Commission. Because new additions can change the character of historic buildings, an addition should only be considered after it has been determined that the new use cannot be met by altering interior spaces.

New additions should be compatible with the historic character of the property and district or neighborhood in terms of size, scale, proportion, design, material, color, and texture.

Scale is the size of a building relative to its surrounding structures, topographic and spatial features, abutters, and the components parts of the building. The relative size of an addition and its elements is an important consideration.

It is important to keep projects within the existing scale of the surrounding area. The factors affecting the appropriateness of scale would not only be the actual measured height of the building but also its volume. Often there are methods for visually decreasing the apparent scale of a building through detailing, proportion and color.

Proportion refers to the ratios of height, width and depth of the building and its various elements. Proper proportion can be one of the

most difficult attributes to capture in the design process. Each historical style has its own “rules” of scale. For some styles these rules may be quite flexible while for others they may be rigid. Disturbing a style’s sense of scale can make a building awkward and ungainly. Professional assistance by designers with historic design backgrounds is recommended for those seeking to construct new buildings or additions.

General guidelines for new additions are:

- New additions and related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property, both in architecture and in its setting. Work shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.
- Additions should be designed so that the character of the existing building is not

radically changed, obscured, damaged, destroyed, or rendered subordinate to the addition.

- Additions should be subservient to the original structure; be differentiated from the existing building; and located where least visible from public view.



Historic postcard of the Homer Building circa 1900 (courtesy the Belmont Historical Society)

UNIVERSAL ACCESS



The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is federal legislation that provides guidelines to states related to access to public buildings. In Massachusetts, the federal guidelines provide the framework for the accessibility code (521 CMR) implemented by the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board. “For registered historical buildings or districts, owned or protected by the government, the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board may allow alternate accessibility.”

In general, solutions for improving universal access should meet current standards and ensure that the features, material, spaces and overall character of the historic building and site are preserved. The BHDC reviews alterations for universal access on a case by case basis. There is no single solution for achieving barrier-free access into historic buildings and sites. Each solution must be tailored for the individual historic property and its landscape. The Commission will work collaboratively with the property owner to find a solution that meets the combined goals of access and preservation.



HEALTH and SAFETY



Current health and safety codes (public health, occupational health, life safety, fire safety, electrical, structural and building codes) may necessitate alterations that have the potential to affect the character of a historic property. For this reason, property owners should work with public [code] officials to explore alternative systems, methods, or devices so that unnecessary alterations can be avoided.

The BHDC supports compliance with health and safety codes in such a way that the building and site's character-defining features, materials and spaces are preserved.



Frequently Asked Questions

What color may I paint my house?

Property owners may retain an existing color, keeping in mind it may be inappropriate to the period of the building; or they may seek approval of a new color selected from the palette of historical colors developed by Historic New England (available on loan from the Commission or for purchase from Historic New England's website

www.historicnewengland.org) or an acceptable compatible alternative. The Commission is available on an informal basis to discuss period colors or advise on possible color choices.

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 archaeology. It is a federal designation and is administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Massachusetts Historical Commission. National Register designation provides limited protection from adverse effects by federally or state funded, licensed, or assisted projects through the federal Section 106 process (36 CFR, Part 800) or Massachusetts Historical Commission's review and compliance process (Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 9, sections 26-27C).

How long will the approval process take?

The approval process generally takes between 18 to 45 days, but can take longer if the application materials are incomplete or if the Commission determines a site visit to the property is required.

What is required to complete the application?

Application must include photographs of existing conditions, a site map, and drawings in plan and elevation that include information about proposed dimensions, materials and any other information needed for the Commission to visualize the proposed changes, and sample materials and/or literature about any proprietary products proposed for use. Applications for paint colors shall include a manufacturer's paint chip or color chart.

What if my Application/Proposal is denied?

You have thirty (30) calendar days within to file an appeal to the Middlesex Superior Court.

Is there funding available to help me maintain my historic house?

The Town of Belmont does not provide funding to property owners for the maintenance of historic properties. From time to time public funds are available through the Massachusetts Historical Commission. For more information visit www.state.ma.us/sec/mhc/mhcidx.htm. For information about other possible funding

sources for historic preservation contact the National Trust for Historic Preservation (www.nthp.org) or PreservationMass (www.preservationmass.org).

Is there a list of contractors that specialize in working on historic houses?

The Belmont Historic District Commission does not provide recommendations of contractors or architects. The Massachusetts Historical Commission (www.state.ma.us/sec/mhc/mhcidx.htm) maintains a list of contractors and architects that have worked on projects funded by the Massachusetts Preservation Projects Funds. When choosing contractors and architects to work on your property it is recommended to carefully review past projects and references.



Photo © Richard Cheek



Sources of Information and Additional Resources

Belmont Historic District Commission, *Belmont, Massachusetts: The Architecture and Development of The Town Of Homes*, 1984

Birnbaum, Charles and Chris Capella-Peters, editors. *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*. (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1996).

Jester, Thomas C. *Preserving the Past and Making it Accessible for People with Disabilities*. (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1992).

Massachusetts Historical Commission. "Access to History: A Guide to Providing Access to Historic Buildings for People with Disabilities."

McAlester, Virginia and Lee McAlester. *Field Guide to American Houses*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984).

Morton, W. Brown, Gary L. Hume, Kay D. Weeks, H. Ward Jandl. *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*. (Washington, DC: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, 1992).

National Park Service, *Preservation Briefs* (numerous topics related to the preservation of historic buildings, structures and sites) available at <http://www.nps.gov/history/HPS/TPS/tpscat.htm>.

National Park Service/Heritage Preservation, Inc. *Caring for Your Historic House*. (Harry N. Abrams, Inc. 1998).

Slaton, Deborah and Rebecca Shiffer, editors. *Preserving the Recent Past*. (Washington, DC: Historic Preservation Education Foundation, 1995).

Slaton, Deborah and William Foulks, editors.
Preserving the Recent Past II.
(Washington, DC: Historic Preservation
Education Foundation/National Park
Service, 2000).

Weeks, Kay D. and Anne E. Grimmer. *The
Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the
Treatment of Historic Properties with
Illustrated Guidelines for Preserving,
Rehabilitating, Restoring, and
Reconstructing Historic Buildings.*
(Washington, DC: U.S. Dept. of the
Interior, National Park Service, 1995).

Young, Robert A. *Historic Preservation
Technology: A Primer.* (New York: John
Wiley, 2008)

Web Links

Belmont Historic District Commission

http://www.town.belmont.ma.us/public_documents/BelmontMA_BComm/historicdistrict

Massachusetts Historical Commission

<http://www.sec.state.ma.us/MHC/>

National Park Service

*Secretary of Interior Standards and Guidelines
for the Treatment of Historic Properties*
includes guidance on four philosophical
approaches: preservation, rehabilitation,

restoration, and reconstruction. The treatment
'Rehabilitation' is the primary approach the
Belmont Historic District Commission follows
when evaluating proposed changes to historic
properties (Appendix C). Both the Standards
and the Guidelines can be found at:

<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/rhb>

Preservation Briefs

In addition to the Secretary of Interior *Standards
and Guidelines*, the National Park Service
publishes *Preservation Briefs* that provide very
useful and well-illustrated information on
materials and techniques for preservation. See
the list of available documents at:

<http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm>

National Register of Historic Places

<http://www.nps.gov/nr/>

Belmont Historical Society

<http://www.belmonthistoricalsociety.org/>

Preservation Massachusetts

<http://www.preservationmass.org/>

Historic New England

<http://www.historicnewengland.org/>

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

<http://www.achp.gov/>



Appendix A

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Certificates of Appropriateness, Non-Applicability and Hardship

Complete all information required on the Application and be certain to include supporting documentation shown below. Ten (10) copies of the documentation must be submitted.

Drawings should be in a format which will fit, or can be folded into, an 8-1/2 x 11 inch file.

Please note that failure to provide adequate information and documentation may result in a rejected Application. A preliminary meeting with the Historic District Commission is strongly suggested prior to submitting an Application. The following documentation, as applicable, must be submitted:

A. Photographs

Current photographs are required for all applications, including minor development. At a minimum, a photo of the entire front building façade must be submitted as a record of existing conditions. Photos of rear and side facades, roofs, details, site, and neighboring buildings must be submitted if the work may affect those areas.

B. Site Plan (recommended minimum scale 1"=20'-0")

A site plan is required for all applications. The site plan must show the relationship of the building and proposed improvements to the major site elements, adjacent street(s), and neighboring buildings.

C. Floor Plans (recommended minimum scale ¼" =1'-0")

Floor plans, showing existing and proposed conditions, are required for all projects involving additions and/or alterations of existing exterior doors, windows, walls, porches, and other exterior elements.

D. Roof Plan (recommended minimum scale ¼" =1'-0")

A roof plan, showing existing and proposed conditions, is required for all projects involving alterations to the roof(s).

E. Elevations and Sections (recommended minimum scale is ¼" =1'-0")

Full elevations and sections, showing existing and proposed conditions, are required for projects involving additions and/or alterations to the building exterior. Include at least one full section drawn through the building(s) and site showing the relationship between the building, site topography, major landscape features, and adjacent road(s). Wall sections (recommended minimum scale ¾"=1'0") must be prepared showing new projecting elements (bays, balconies, additions, etc.).

F. Detail Drawings (recommended minimum scale 1-1/2"=1'-0")

Submit details of important exterior elements (e.g. eaves, railings, trim, etc.)

F. Manufacturer's product literature and specifications

Submit manufacturer's information of specific exterior elements (e.g. windows, light fixtures, roofing, etc.).

H. Zoning Compliance / Non-Compliance

Submit a statement of compliance, or non-compliance, with zoning regulations governing use and dimensional regulations (height, square

footage, setbacks, FAR, etc.). The Historic District Commission will not hold a hearing on the Application until any required variance has been issued by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

I. Model (optional)

It is recommended that a model be submitted for projects involving substantial new construction, additions and / or alterations.

J. Other

1. On site mock-ups of specific, important exterior elements may be required by the Commission, prior to granting full approval.
2. For changes necessary to meet Code, (e. g. fire egress, handicap access, etc.), certification from appropriate agencies (e. g. Fire Department, Building Department, Access Board, etc.), that the work is required.
3. For projects involving full or partial demolition of the building(s) submit, as relevant, the following: a report on the historic and architectural significance of the building; economic impacts of demolition vs. rehabilitation; certification from the Building Department that the demolition is required for public safety; and, other relevant information.
4. Other relevant documentation which the applicant wishes to submit in support of the Application (e. g. letters from abutters, historic photos, etc.).

Belmont Historic District Commission Town Hall Belmont, MA 02478	Belmont Historic District Commission APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS	FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
	Application is hereby made for the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness under the provisions of the General Laws, Chapter 40C amended and the Belmont By-laws, Article 15. PLEASE SEE ATTACHED INSTRUCTIONS. TYPE OR PRINT APPLICATION.	Application No. _____ Received _____ By _____ Fee Paid _____ Hearing Date _____ Application Returned _____

1. ADDRESS _____	PRECINCT _____
2. NAME OF BUSINESS OR PROPERTY _____	

3. APPLICANT _____ Address _____	Phone _____ Zip Code _____
4. PROPERTY OWNER* _____ Address _____	Phone _____ Zip Code _____
5. ARCHITECT _____ Address _____	Phone _____ Zip Code _____
6. CONTRACTOR _____ Address _____	Phone _____ Zip Code _____

7. **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ALL PROPOSED WORK** (This description provides the basis for the Commission's decision; it must clearly represent the entirety of the project. Use additional pages if needed.)

8. **Does the proposed work require other permits or approvals** (other than a building permit)? If yes, explain:

9. DOCUMENTATION ATTACHED: A. <input type="checkbox"/> Photographs B. <input type="checkbox"/> Site Plan C. <input type="checkbox"/> Floor Plans D. <input type="checkbox"/> Roof Plan E. <input type="checkbox"/> Elevations, Sections F. <input type="checkbox"/> Detail Drawings	G. <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturer's product literature, specifications H. <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning, compliance/ non-compliance I. <input type="checkbox"/> Model J. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	10. SIGNATURES (Both are required) Applicant _____ Date _____ Owner* _____ Date _____ * If the property is a condominium, the Chairperson must sign.
--	---	--

SCALE DRAWINGS AND PHOTOGRAPHS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS AND ALL PROPOSED WORK MUST BE SUPPLIED BY THE APPLICANT. INSUFFICIENT DOCUMENT AND INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL BE RETURNED.



Pleasant Street circa 1900 (courtesy the Belmont Historical Society)

Appendix B

SUMMARY HISTORY OF BELMONT

Belmont was incorporated as a town on March 18, 1859 from parts of the surrounding communities of Waltham, Watertown, and West Cambridge (now Arlington), and is distinguished architecturally, culturally, and economically from these earlier, neighboring towns because of its later development as a location for successful market garden farms and quiet country estates. The land comprising Belmont was originally settled as parts of Watertown and Newtowne (now Cambridge) in the 1630s. Led by Sir Richard Saltonstall, the earliest settlers established in Watertown the first agricultural settlement in the Massachusetts Bay area. Building their meeting house near the site of the present center of Watertown, these colonists were independent farmers who received grants of land beginning in 1636. They called their settlement “Pequossette Plantation” after the Pequossette Native American tribe that lived in the area between the present Payson

Park Reservoir and the western shores of Fresh Pond.



Historic 1909 view along Pleasant Street (courtesy Belmont Historical Society)

The earliest routes developed at this time remain today: the major east-west axis of Belmont Street and the major north/south axis of Pleasant Street; and Common, School, Grove and Washington Streets. Settlement was

scattered along these early routes representing the farming fringes of Waltham, Watertown and West Cambridge. One of the first to settle here was Roger Wellington who arrived in 1636 and had a farm at present day Belmont Center. Wellington was joined by other colonists who also engaged in subsistence farming, the major activity in the area up through the beginning of the nineteenth century. Still a part of Waltham, Watertown and West Cambridge during the years of the Revolutionary War, inhabitants provided two companies of Minutemen and supplied food for the troops fighting for independence.

The opening of the Concord Turnpike in 1807 (present-day Concord Avenue) made Belmont accessible to Boston to the east, and Lexington and Concord to the west. As a result an early crossroads was created at the intersection of Concord Avenue and Pleasant Street at what would eventually become Belmont Center. At the beginning of the nineteenth century early market garden farm operations were established by several families including the Wellingtons, Lockes, Hills, Frosts and Richardsons who sold their produce at Boston's Fanueil Hall. These farmers prospered and market garden farming dominated Belmont's economy through the nineteenth century. In addition to farming, a fulling (cloth processing) mill industry existed at Beaver Brook which had been active in the late-seventeenth century and was renewed by the Kendall family in 1819, brick making at Clay Pit Pond, and an ice cutting industry on Fresh Pond and Spy Pond that supplied ice for ships leaving Boston Harbor. The ice cutting industry played a key role in securing a railroad line to Belmont in 1843 as it allowed large quantities of ice to be quickly transported to Boston. The arrival of passenger train service to Belmont at this time made this area easily accessible from Boston and

paved the way for an era of suburban settlement.



Historic view circa 1877 of the original Belmont Estate (courtesy Belmont Historical Society)

Even before the arrival of rail transportation, however, Belmont was beginning to attract the wealthy as a location for spacious country estates. Among the first to arrive was China trade merchant John Perkins Cushing who built his large estate, "Bellmont," in 1840 which was located in the residential area today located across Belmont Street from the Oakley Country Club and bounded by Common and School Streets. "Bellmont" consisted of 150 acres of land and included a fifty-room mansion (razed in 1927), landscaped grounds with rare and unusual specimen plantings, greenhouses, and farmland. Other estates were established throughout the area creating an early-nineteenth century scene of picturesque farms and orchards, winding roads, and an occasional estate with landscaped drives and grounds. The quiet agricultural nature of the community, which was removed from the centers of Waltham, Watertown and West Cambridge, changed with the arrival of the extension of the Fitchburg Railroad in 1843. Three crossings were established in present-day Belmont: Hill's Crossing at Bright Road; Wellington Hill Station at what is now Belmont Center; and Plympton's Crossing at Waverley Square. Each station spurred adjacent residential development

during the late 1840s and 1850s. Small country stores were built at the Wellington Hill and Waverley railroad crossings in the 1850s, representing the beginnings of commercial development in Belmont. As newcomers arrived in Belmont they built large rural estates, such as the Underwood Estate which was bounded by Concord Avenue and School and Common Streets, and summer residences such as the William Flagg Homer House at 661 Pleasant Street. The Waverley Land Company was formed in 1851 as a commercial land investment corporation that sought to market land in Waverley now accessible from Boston by rail. Although this company was slow to succeed in developing Waverley, it was a precursor of the later residential subdivisions that would come to control most of Belmont's later development.



1909 historic view of the railroad bridge with parade commemorating the 50th anniversary of Belmont (courtesy Belmont Historical Society)

By the mid-nineteenth century, as the population increased in the outlying districts of Watertown, Waltham and West Cambridge, many residents felt that their taxes would be best used in the establishment of schools and the improvement of roads in their area. Desired improvements were not forthcoming, however, and in 1854, 125 local residents petitioned the general court of the Commonwealth of

Massachusetts to request the incorporation of a new town, called Belmont, after John Perkins Cushing's estate, "Bellmont." Cushing, the largest taxpayer in the area contributed substantially to the cost of incorporation. The 1854 petition was denied, as were those subsequently submitted over the next four years. A primary argument against incorporation was the criticism by the surrounding towns that the proposal was nothing more than a real estate speculation scheme to form a town where wealthy landowners would incur low taxes; this objection had some basis in fact, since among others involved in the incorporation effort were merchants John Hittinger, Samuel Mead, Edward Grant and market gardener Jonas Chenery, all of whom also possessed large parcels of land. Another argument against incorporation was the fact that the proposed town did not have a church, a public hall, or a blacksmith shop. To redress the absence of a church, a Congregational meeting house was constructed on Concord Avenue in 1857 (destroyed by fire in 1889 and located at the site of the present-day post office) which provided credibility to the advocates of incorporation. Another petition for incorporation was made in 1859, signed this time by 203 residents. This time the petition was granted and Belmont became a town on March 18, 1859. At the time of its incorporation, Belmont exhibited little cohesiveness as there was no center of commercial activity, two post offices, and three schoolhouses.

The years following incorporation saw continuing patterns of development, as the land was slowly subdivided for new farms, estates and country houses near the railroad centers. The railroad was having an effect on the growth of Belmont, but its rural atmosphere persisted. An important link to the growing Boston

medical community came to Belmont in 1872 with the progressive relocation of McLean Hospital to a 114-acre wooded hill site, opposite Beaver Brook, for which the pastoral setting was selected by noted landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted.



Historic view circa 1875 of the Belmont Estate barn (courtesy Belmont Historical Society)

Belmont's commuter population increased substantially with the 1882 addition of the Central Massachusetts Railroad alongside the Fitchburg line, and the extension of electric trolley routes along Trapelo Road from Cambridge to Waverley in 1902, and along Grove Street and Concord Avenue to Belmont Center in 1906. The expansion of the Trolley lines resulted in the establishment of Belmont as a Boston-dependent suburb as existing farms and estates were subdivided on a large scale for development of upper and middle-class residences. As new neighborhoods developed, facilities to serve them were constructed, including churches, schools, recreational areas and businesses. Municipal investment in Belmont was symbolized at this time by the development of Belmont Center as the governmental and civic focus of the community with the construction of the Town Hall in 1882, the Belmont Center Fire Station in 1899, and the

Belmont Public Library building (now the School Administration Building) in 1902.



Historic postcard view of the Belmont Public Library, now the School Administration Building (courtesy Richard Cheek)

The economic decline of farming and the rise of the automobile after World War I further directed the course of Belmont's growth toward suburban development. Both suburbanization and the prevalent taste for historical revival designs during the early-twentieth century eliminated most traces of farming in Belmont. The result was a carefully planned, maintained and serviced community that became known as "The Town of Homes." Little industrial activity occurred in Belmont, and economic activity was limited to commercial stores and services supported by Belmont's growing population. Multi-family housing continued to be built in areas convenient to the trolley routes along Trapelo Road and Concord Avenue; however, the proliferation of this type of housing was restricted by zoning regulations passed in 1925. These zoning laws were designed to limit multi-family housing to those areas where it already existed, allowing for the development of single-family neighborhoods in the remainder of the town and creating Belmont's residential image as it exists today. Belmont's population tripled between 1915 and 1935, growing to about 25,000. Scores of single-family houses were built in Belmont during this period, most in the Colonial

Revival and Tudor Revival styles. In addition to these traditional style homes, Belmont has several outstanding examples of Modern style houses including those located on Snake Hill Road designed by Carl Koch between 1940 and 1941.



Historic postcard view of "Business Block, Belmont, MA" (courtesy Richard Cheek)

While many significant and historic homes and structures have regrettably been lost to development in common with many urban communities, Belmont is more fortunate than most to possess still a representative stock of housing types and styles, stretching from the

late-seventeenth century through to the late-twentieth century, and boasts a complex of attractive and historic town government buildings second to none in suburban Boston. It is this unique legacy that has prompted efforts by Belmont citizens to protect and preserve the Town's irreplaceable heritage. Belmont, a small community without great available land, has managed to retain, and retain value in, many of its historic resources.





Appendix C

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES²

Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property will be used as it was historically, or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of

² The Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* include standards for preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction. Rehabilitation "makes possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values" is the most appropriate treatment for properties covered under these guidelines.

features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

3. Each property will 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, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be

substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent new construction will be undertaken in such a manner, that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environments would be unimpaired.



Photo © Richard Cheek



Appendix D

TOWN OF BELMONT, ARTICLE 15: HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

15.1 There is established under the Historic Districts Act, Chapter 40C of the General Laws, a Belmont Historic District Commission consisting of seven members to be appointed by the Selectmen, including one member, where possible, from two nominees submitted by the Belmont Historical Society; one member, where possible, from two nominees, one of whom shall be submitted by the Chapter of American Institute of Architects covering Belmont and one of whom shall be submitted by the Boston Society of Landscape Architects; and one member, where possible, from two nominees of the Board of Realtors covering Belmont. One or more of the foregoing shall be a resident of a historic district established in Belmont pursuant to the Historic Districts Act. The Selectmen shall also appoint three alternate members of the Commission. Section 15.1 amended at April 22, 1991, Annual Town Meeting, and approved by Attorney General Scott Harshbarger on June 3, 1991.

15.2 There is established under the provisions of the Historic Districts Act, as amended, a historic district to be known as the Wellington Historic District, bounded as shown on a map entitled, "Plan Showing Wellington Historic District, Pleasant Street, Belmont, Mass.," dated December 16, 1971, prepared by the Town Engineer, which shall be a part of this By-Law.

15.13 The Commission established hereunder shall have all of the powers and duties of the Belmont Historical Commission, as provided in Chapter 40, Section 8D, of the General Laws and, upon the establishment of the Commission hereunder, the former Belmont Historical Commission shall cease to exist.

15.4 The Commission shall have all of the powers and duties of a historic district commission and all of the powers and duties of a historical commission (and may in the exercise of any of the powers and duties accept money gifts and expend the same, and, subject to appropriation or receipt of such gifts, employ clerical and technical assistants or consultants)

and the aforesaid powers and duties shall include without limitation the following:

- (a) To conduct a survey of Belmont buildings for the purpose of determining those of historic significance, architecturally or otherwise, and pertinent facts about them, acting in collaboration with the Planning Board and the Belmont Historical Society to the extent either may from time to time be able to undertake such work, and to maintain and from time to time revise detailed listings of historic sites and buildings in Belmont and data about them appropriately classified with respect to national, state or local significance, to period or field of interest, or otherwise;
- (b) To propose from time to time as it deems appropriate the establishment, in accordance with the provisions of the Historic Districts Act, of additional historic districts and changes in historic districts;
- (c) To determine an appropriate system of markers for selected historic sites and buildings not already sufficiently marked, to arrange for preparation and installation of such markers and to arrange for care of historic markers;
- (d) To arrange for preparation and publication of maps and brochures and descriptive material about Belmont historic sites and buildings, arrange for convenient walks or tours, or otherwise;
- (e) To cooperate with and advise the Planning Board, the Highway Department and other town departments in matters involving historic sites and buildings;

- (f) To cooperate with and enlist assistance for Belmont from the National Park Service, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, and other agencies, public and private, from time to time concerned with historic sites and buildings;
- (g) To advise owners of historic buildings in Belmont on problems of preservation.

15.5 The Commission may recommend to the Selectmen as needed appointment of advisory committees of historians and persons interested in architecture or other arts or in historic restoration or preservation to assist in a manner comparable to the National Park Service Advisory Board or Consulting Committee.

15.6 The Commission shall adopt rules and regulations for the conduct of its business not inconsistent with the provisions of the Historic Districts Act, the provisions of Chapter 40, Section 8D, of the General Laws (the Historical Commission Act) or this Article, as the case may be.

15.7 When taking action under the provisions of Section 11 of the Historic Districts Act, the Commission shall make its determination within 45 calendar days after the filing of the application for a certificate of appropriateness or hardship or such further time as the applicant may in writing allow.

15.8 In case any section, paragraph or part of this Article be for any reason declared invalid or unconstitutional by any court, every other section, paragraph or part shall continue in full force and effect.



Appendix E

ADDRESSES IN THE PLEASANT STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

Street	Addresses
Alexander Avenue	7
Centre Avenue	23, 26, 34, 39
Clifton Avenue	4
Concord Avenue	455, 480, 486, 504, 515, 527
Hay Road	1
Moore Street	12, 19
Pleasant Street	467, 480, 483, 490, 496, 500, 505, 509, 519, 524, 529, 530, 533, 536, 539, 543, 548, 560, 561, 568, 582, 585, 592, 593, 596, 600, 601, 604, 605, 613, 618, 624, 626, 628, 631, 634, 641, 642, 644, 661, 692, 701, 707, 710, 711, 721, 722
Somerset Street	5, 20, 25, 30, 37
Stella Road	6
Sunnyside Place	5, 7, 11, 21

Street	Addresses
Wellington Lane	21, 27, 33
Winn Street	6
Town Hall Complex	Belmont Town Hall Homer Building School Administration Building

(addresses are included above)

