



City of Saratoga Springs

New Construction

Historic District Guidelines

New construction in a historic district is encouraged, and the use of contemporary materials may be acceptable, provided the overall mass, scale, texture and details of the structure does not negatively impact the historic character of the historic or contributing buildings in the surrounding area

Prior to determining the placement of new construction, significant site features such as historic sidewalks, decorative fencing, stone walls and landscape should be identified. These features are part of the property's history and should be preserved and incorporated into your design whenever possible.

City Planning Department staff can assist and guide applicants through the requirements and approval process; it is recommended that you contact them well in advance of finalizing construction designs and drawings. For additional information on site and area requirements, see the City Zoning Ordinance at www.saratoga-springs.org.

NEW BUILDINGS

- Architectural styles for new construction should reflect and represent the period in which it is built. The style of new construction should be compatible with surrounding buildings but should not give the false impression of being historic. Construction methods and materials can differentiate new construction from historic structures.
 - The placement and orientation of new buildings should be consistent with neighboring buildings. Maintaining a consistent streetscape and façade setback is recommended.
 - Building mass should be appropriate to the size of the lot. A large lot can generally accommodate a larger structure, while a small structure is more appropriate for a smaller lot.
 - Building height and scale should be consistent with the existing streetscape and neighboring building patterns. Historic streetscapes often have variation in building scale and massing that contribute to the visual interest and unique historic character of the street. Variation is promoted, but extreme differences should be avoided.
 - Buildings with large, uninterrupted massing should be broken into smaller visual components consistent with neighboring buildings.
 - Rooflines and shapes should be consistent with surrounding historic structures.
 - New construction windows and doors should complement the window and door sizes, patterns and rhythm of neighboring historic buildings.
 - Façade rhythm should maintain the vertical or horizontal emphasis that is prevalent on the street.
 - Porches are a significant architectural feature and typical of residences in Saratoga Springs. Porches, appropriate to the mass and scale of the building, are encouraged in new construction.
 - Primary entrances to the building should orient to the street and be well designated.
 - New construction materials should be compatible with and complement the surrounding historic buildings. Natural materials are encouraged. Contemporary materials may be used provided they do not negatively impact historic character of the neighboring buildings. The use of vinyl is discouraged.
-

ACCESSORY BUILDINGS (GARAGES, SHED, ETC.)

- A secondary/accessory building should be distinct from, and smaller in scale than, the primary structure.
 - While the shape, mass and scale of a secondary/accessory structure should generally reflect the primary structure, it should not visually compete with the primary structure.
 - The placement of accessory structures should be consistent with other secondary structures in the neighboring area.
 - Accessory buildings and garages should reflect a secondary use and should not compete with the primary façade of the building. Placement towards the rear of the property is preferred.
 - If available, garage access is recommended to be from an alley or secondary street.
 - Open-air carports and porte-cocheres provide alternatives to contemporary garages.
 - Building materials should be the same as, or complement, the primary structure.
-

ADDITIONS

- Building additions should not look as though they are original to the historic building. They should be distinct from, and identifiable, as an addition to, the historic structure. Stepping down the roof line or stepping back from the primary façade may achieve this.
- An addition should be smaller in scale than the original building so that it does not overshadow the existing building. It should complement the original building's roof form, massing, floor heights, proportion and window and door fenestration.
- An addition should be located where it is least visible and designed to minimally affect the perception of the original structure.
- Additions should not obscure, damage or destroy the character-defining features of the primary building or streetscape.
- Additions should be constructed so that, if removed in the future, the historic integrity of the building or its materials would not be irreparably damaged.
- Materials and details should be similar to, or complement, the primary structure.

City of Saratoga Springs
Design Review Commission
Office of Planning & Economic Development
474 Broadway, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
(518) 587-3550 / www.saratoga-springs.org

Historic District Design Guidelines were produced in partnership with the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation: (518) 587-5030 / www.saratogapreservation.org. This material has been partially financed with federal funds from the National Park Service (NPS), Department of the Interior (DOI). However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior. The activity has been administered by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation. This program receives Federal funds from the NPS. Regulations of the DOI strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental Federally Assisted Programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or handicap. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility operated by a recipient of Federal assistance should write to: Director, Equal Opportunity Program, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, P.O. 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013
