City of Worcester

RULES AND REGULATIONS
FOR
LOCAL HISTRIC DISTRICTS

Adopted September 2, 1975
To: Residents of the Massachusetts Avenue Historic District  
  Public Officials Concerned

Herewith enclosed are informational materials explaining the  
functions, rights, and responsibilities connected with the  
Massachusetts Avenue Historic District. This District is under  
the jurisdiction of the Worcester Historical Commission according  
to the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40C and the City of  

As a resident of this District it is important to be aware of and  
abide by these rules and regulations governing the District. It  
is the Worcester Historical Commission's aim to preserve this  
area's unique quality and stabilize property values.

The Bureau of Land Use Control has on file a copy of the above  
mentioned state and local regulations for public view along with  
additional copies of the aforementioned material. If you have  
any further questions, the Worcester Historical Commission will  
be glad to assist you. The Commission can be contacted through  
the Bureau of Land Use Control, City Hall, Room 209, Tel. 799-1144.

Mr. Suzanne O. Carlson, Chairman       Mrs. Janet K. McCorison, Vice Chairman       Mrs. Frank Callahan, Secretary
Glenn C. DeMallie, John Herron, Mrs. C. Raymond Peterson
Recognizing the need to preserve historic property in Worcester, the City Council on September 2, 1975, passed legislation establishing the Worcester Historical Commission and the Massachusetts Avenue Historic District. Under Chapter 40C of the Massachusetts General Laws and Article 33 of the Revised Ordinances of 1974 for the City of Worcester, the Worcester Historical Commission has the responsibility to administer the Massachusetts Avenue Historic District and any other historic districts within the city that are established, along with preserving, promoting, and developing historical assets of the municipality.

The acts subject property owners within historic districts to specific regulations regarding their property. According to the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40C, Section 6:

"Except as the ordinance or by-law may otherwise provide...
no building or structure within an historic district shall be constructed or altered in any way that affects exterior* architectural features unless the commission shall first have issued a certificate of appropriateness, a certificate of non-applicability or a certificate of hardship with respect to such construction or alteration."

The Worcester Historical Commission further states that "no building or structure shall be erected, reconstructed, altered, restored, moved or demolished" without first receiving the necessary certificate from the Commission before any issuance of a building or demolition permit.

*exterior refers to that portion of building or structure open to view from a public street, way, park or body of water.
At the present time prior certification is required when the following tasks are undertaken: 1. work involving a change in design, color, texture, or type of exterior building materials; 2. work involving the changing of the color of paint or other materials applied to exterior surfaces; 3. work involving the type and style of windows and doors; 4. work involving signs, lights, and other appurtenant fixtures; 5. work involving walls and fences; 6. work involving terraces, walks, driveways and similar structures.

Prior certification is not required for the following: 1. ordinary maintenance or repairs of exterior architectural features which does not affect a change in design, color, material or outward appearance; 2. interior work that does not affect the exterior of the building; 3. work on the grounds that includes landscaping with plants, trees, or shrubs as long as it does not alter the public view.

Depending upon the particular circumstances the Worcester Historical Commission may issue one of three different types of certificates upon receipt of an application: 1. Certificate of Appropriateness; 2. Certificate of Non-Applicability; 3. Certificate of Hardship.

**Certificate of Appropriateness:** This type of certificate will be issued when the proposed work is in conformity with and suitable to the preservation of the historic district.

**Certificate of Non-Applicability:** This certificate will be issued when the proposed work does not require a Certificate of Appropriateness. This may be issued when the applicant has any doubts to whether the proposed work is under the jurisdiction of the Commission.
Certificate of Hardship: This certificate will be issued when the Commission decides that "substantial hardship" is involved concerning proposed work that is not considered suitable for a Certificate of Appropriateness but would not significantly detract from state and local historic regulations nor result in any substantial detriment to the public welfare.

Procedure for Application

1. All applications must be submitted in writing to the Worcester Historical Commission in care of the Bureau of Land Use Control, Room 209, City Hall.

2. An application must include plot plans, architectural drawings, and other relevant information.

3. An application must be received at least two weeks prior to the next regularly scheduled Historical Commission meeting (third Tuesday of the month), in order that a public hearing may be held on that date.

4. The Commission will then make a ruling on the application and if appropriate issue the proper certificate at that meeting.

An applicant may appeal the Commission's decision by filing a written request to the Commission for review of the ruling within twenty days after filing of the notice of the determination with the City Clerk. A review will be undertaken by a person or persons of competence appointed by the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission.

Work approved by the Historical Commission must be started within twelve months from the date of approval. A written request is necessary for an extension of time on the application. Also any changes to the findings, decisions, or the actual plans must be considered and voted upon in public meeting after proper notification.
CITY OF WORCESTER

WORCESTER HISTORICAL COMMISSION

APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION
(to be submitted in duplicate)

Pursuant to the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40C as amended and the City of Worcester Revised Ordinances of 1974, Article 3B, application is hereby made for certification of proposed exterior work at the location described below.

DATE: _____________________________________________

LOCATION (street & number): ___________________________

APPLICANT: _________________________________________

ADDRESS: _________________________________________

TELEPHONE: _________________________________________

OWNER: _____________________________________________

ADDRESS: _________________________________________

ARCHITECT OR ENGINEER: ______________________________

ADDRESS: _________________________________________

CONTRACTOR OR BUILDER: _____________________________

ADDRESS: _________________________________________

If applicable and known, give the following information:

Year building erected _____________________________

Original architect or builder ___________________________

Basic architectural style ______________________________

TYPE OF CERTIFICATION (check one):

_______ Certificate of Appropriateness

_______ Certificate of Non-Applicability

_______ Certificate of Hardship
Please indicate the category of the proposed work. (check one)

Alteration or reconstruction ______ Relocation ______

New construction ______ Demolition ______

Write a brief description of the proposed work. Also attach plot plans, architectural drawings, and other relevant information to the application.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Check appropriate exterior features below:

____ chimneys; ____ roofing; ____ roof accessories; ____ antennae;

____ gutters & rain leaders; ____ siding; ____ exterior trim;

____ windows; ____ exterior doors; ____ driveways; ____ entrances;

____ porches & verandas; ____ exterior stairs; ____ door accessories;

____ shutters, blinds, and accessories; ____ awnings; ____ paint;

____ driveways; ____ walks; ____ parking areas; ____ sidewalks;

____ steps; ____ railings; ____ fences; ____ signs;

____ lighting fixtures; ____ monuments; ____ utilities;

____ other (please indicate):

________________________________________________________________________

If this is an application for a Certificate of Hardship, please give the following additional information. Please state the reasons for this application in the space below. Explain why a failure to approve the application would involve a "substantial hardship," or would not adversely affect the public welfare, or would not significantly detract from the intent and purposes of the local and state historic regulations. (Attach additional sheets if necessary.)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
CITY OF WORCESTER

WORCESTER HISTORICAL COMMISSION

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

CERTIFICATE NO. ______________________

APPLICANT: _________________________ ADDRESS: _________________________

OWNER: ___________________________ ADDRESS: ___________________________

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WORK: ____________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

HEARING WAIVED: YES [ ] NO [ ]

DECISION:

APPROVED: [ ]

APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS: [ ]

_________________________________________________________________________

DISAPPROVED: [ ]

DISAPPROVED FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS: [ ]

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

WORCESTER HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Date: _____________________________ Signed by: ____________________________ Chairman