



## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES FACT SHEET

### *Criteria for Evaluation*

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- a. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- b. that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- c. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- d. that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Properties that are less than 50 years of age, or moved or reconstructed buildings are generally not eligible for National Register listing unless exceptional significance can be shown.

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### **The National Register DOES**

1. Identify significant buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts.
2. Encourage the preservation of historic properties by documenting their significance and by lending support to local preservation activities.
3. Enable federal, state, and local agencies to consider historic properties in the early stages of planning projects.
4. Provide for review of federally funded, licensed, or sponsored projects which may affect historic properties.
5. Make qualified owners of historic properties eligible for federal and state grants for preservation activities.
6. Encourage the rehabilitation of income-producing historic properties through tax incentives.
7. Provide eligibility for the CT Historic Homes Rehabilitation Tax Credit program for owner-occupied historic homes in targeted urban areas.
8. Provide protection from unreasonable destruction under Connecticut General Statutes, Section 22a-19a.
9. Allow consideration of fire and life safety code compliance alternatives when rehabilitating historic buildings.

### **The National Register DOES NOT**

1. Restrict the rights of private property owners in the use, development, or sale of private historic property.
2. Require that properties be maintained, repaired or restored.
3. Automatically lead to historic district zoning or landmark designation.
4. Force federal, state, local or private projects to be stopped.
5. Provide for review of state, local, or *privately* funded projects which may affect historic properties.
6. Guarantee that grant funds will be available for all historic properties or projects.
7. Provide federal tax credits to owners of residential historic properties, unless those properties are rental and treated as income-producing by the IRS.
8. Provide a marker plaque for registered properties (owners may purchase a plaque from the SHPO)

## Frequently Asked Questions

### *What is the National Register?*

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of buildings, structures, districts, objects, and sites significant in the history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture of Connecticut and the nation. In Connecticut the State Historic Preservation Office of the Department of Economic and Community Development administers this program.

### *What are the results of listing?*

1. Registered properties and properties determined eligible for the Register receive a measure of protection from the effects of federal and/or state agency sponsored, licensed or assisted projects through a notice, review, and consultation process.
2. Owners of depreciable, certified historic properties may take a 20 percent federal income tax credit for the costs of substantial rehabilitation as provided for under the Tax Reform Act of 1986.
3. Municipal and not-for-profit owners of listed historic properties may apply for matching state historic preservation grants.
4. There are no restrictions placed on private owners of registered properties. Private property owners may sell, alter or dispose of their property as they wish, although an owner who demolishes a certified registered property may not deduct the costs of demolition from his/her federal income tax. In Connecticut listing on the National Register may provide protection from unreasonable destruction under Connecticut General Statutes, Section 22a-19a.

### *What are the benefits of registration?*

Registration is primarily an honor bestowed on historic properties by the state and federal governments. It recognizes the historic significance of a property and encourages present and future owners to continue to practice thoughtful stewardship. Owners of registered properties may donate historic preservation easements (which can reduce real estate taxes), qualify for the state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits, receive technical assistance from department staff for maintenance and rehabilitation projects, and [purchase plaques](#)<sup>i</sup> that mark the property's significance.

### *Is registration expensive?*

Some property owners successfully complete the Approval for Study process and National Register of Historic Places nomination with advice from department staff. In these cases, there is no fee for registration with the SHPO or the National Park Service. Others, however, may wish to pay a consultant to do the work for them. In many cases, SHPO suggests that the owner hire a consultant to facilitate the process. We suggest that they review our [Consultants Directory](#)<sup>ii</sup> and contact several consultants to compare estimated costs.

*I have heard horror stories about being part of a historic district. Will I have to get permission to repair or make alterations to my home? Will I have officials looking over my shoulder if I'm on the National Register?*

No. Only locally designated historic districts or municipal zoning ordinances are subject to local zoning ordinances and procedures. Sometimes, a property or district may be listed at the national, state, and local levels but it is only the *local designation* that requires review of work visible from a public right-of way. .

*Do I have to open my property to the public if it is registered?*

No. Listing in the National Register of Historic Places does not require that you open your house to the public.

*Will registration or listing increase or decrease my property values and tax burden?*

Many factors influence property values, particularly in today's economic climate. Registration appears to have little effect, although some studies have shown, as one would expect, that well-kept, attractive, older properties and neighborhoods experience a slight rise in values over the long run.

*Can a property be nominated individually if it is within a district?*

Yes. However, this designation is slightly redundant. Property owners in districts are already eligible for the same benefits as owners of individually listed properties. In other words, if a property is listed as a contributing structure within the district, it is on the National Register just as much as if it were listed individually.

*How do I get a plaque?*

Many sites listed in the National Register arrange for a commemorative plaque. Unfortunately the National Register of Historic Places does not issue plaques as a result of listing; rather we leave it up to the individual owners if they are interested in having one. In Connecticut we offer National Register [plaques for sale](#)<sup>iii</sup> through the SHPO. Properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places are not required to have plaques.

How do I get a copy of the file you have on a property?

The National Park Service has digitized our records and have made them available online in their database at:

<http://nrhp.focus.nps.gov/natreghome.do?searchtype=natreghome>

For properties that have not been digitized and put into the database (this includes everything listed after 2008) you can request a copy by contacting the National Register Coordinator. Please be sure to include your name, mailing address, the historic name of the property, its location, including the State and County. If the property is in a historic district, please include the name of the district. Depending upon our work schedules and how many requests we receive our turnaround time for copy requests is about three weeks.

*I am pretty sure that a property is listed, but I cannot find it in your database, why is that?*

The property is most likely located within a historic district. Unfortunately, our database does not include every address within historic districts. If you know the name of a historic district that the property is in, we can look in the file and verify that it is a contributing resource in the district.

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<sup>i</sup> Plaque page

<sup>ii</sup> Link to Consultants directory.

<sup>iii</sup> Go to Plaque Form