

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
FOR PROPERTY OWNERS

What is the National Register of Historic Places?

- ✓ The National Register was created through the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and is maintained by the National Park Service. The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Properties listed in the National Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. These historic places can be significant at the national, state or local level.

What are the criteria for listing a property on the National Register?

- ✓ Properties typically must be greater than 50 years old to be listed on the National Register unless they are exceptionally significant. A property may be eligible for listing on the National Register if it is associated with significant events or persons in local, regional or national history. A property may also be eligible for listing if it represents the work of a significant master architect or is characteristic of a significant architectural movement.

What are the benefits of listing my historic property?

- ✓ A National Register listing is an honor that signifies that your property is an important part of America's cultural heritage and worthy of preservation. Additionally, a property that is listed may qualify for certain grants, tax deductions for the donation of protective easements, or tax credits for qualified rehabilitation activities.

Are there any restrictions associated with listing my historic property?

- ✓ The National Register does not restrict a property owner's private property rights. Owners of National Register properties can remodel, renovate, sell, or even demolish their property with no restrictions. Significant modifications may result in the property being removed from the National Register.
- ✓ However, the federal government does regulate alterations to historic properties where federal funds have been invested. If you have not received federal grant funds or federally sponsored tax benefits (tax credits, grants, etc.) then you have no federal restrictions as a homeowner.
- ✓ If you have received state or local tax funds or funding for preservation of your home, then you may be subject to regulation as well.
- ✓ The Town of Sturbridge does not currently regulate National Register properties through a local historic preservation bylaw. The Town does have an Historic Commercial Zoning

District and bylaw that provides guidance for redevelopment and new structures within that District. Some of the area within the National Register District does fall within that area. The zoning bylaw does not apply to renovations of single-family homes within the District.

Where can I find additional information?

National Register of Historic Places: <http://www.nps.gov/nr/>

Historic Preservation Tax Incentives: <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/>

National Trust for Historic Preservation: <http://www.preservationnation.org>

Massachusetts Historical Commission: <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcpdf/difference.pdf>