

Guide to the Berlin Historic District

**Berlin Historic District Commission
Town of Berlin
240 Kensington Road
Berlin, CT 06037**

Procedural Questions

How do I know if my property is located in the Historic District?

- Properties on Worthington Ridge from Mill Street south to #1326
- Wildem Road- #75
- Hudson Street - # 192-204
- Middletown Road - #10 and #24
- Sunset Lane - #110-192
- Farmington Avenue - #1539

Properties are included regardless of structure age.

If my house is in the historic district, what do I need to know?

Before making any changes temporary or permanent to the exterior of your property that will be visible from a public way (street or sidewalk), consult the town Building Department. Paint color is not regulated. The Building Official will advise if permits are required and will give you an application for “Certificate of Appropriateness”. The COA may also be obtained on the town’s website, www.town.berlin.ct.us/

What is a Certificate of Appropriateness?

A “Certificate of Appropriateness” is an approval acknowledging that the proposed work conforms to the regulations of The Berlin Historic District Commission.

What if I do not get a Certificate of Appropriateness before I start work?

Under Conn. General Statute 7-147, you must apply for and receive a COA prior to proceeding with construction, alternations, demolitions, or face monetary penalties or legal action from the Town of Berlin.

Can I get feedback upfront from the Commission?

You are welcome to attend a regularly scheduled HDC meeting and discuss your project during audience of citizens. HDC meets the first Monday of each month at 7pm, Room 7 Berlin Town Hall. To schedule an informal hearing on your proposed project, contact the Chair of the Commission, Susan Skene @ 860-828-9961 or Vice Chair, Lorraine Stub @ 860-828-5281. Contact person at Town Hall is Hellyn Riggins, Director of Development Services, 860-828-7060, hriggins@town.berlin.ct.us/.

Where do I submit my Application?

Bring everything to the Building Department.

What do I submit with my Application form?

The amount of information will depend on the nature of the work you propose. In most cases you will need to submit:

- Written specifications with measurements
- Scaled drawings of your building showing the nature of the work to be performed
- Photos of the existing structure along with a list of materials
- Sample materials
- Plot plan for additions

For complex projects such as new buildings and structures, more detailed plans and specifications will be required, including plans designed by a licensed architect.

What factors does the Commission take into consideration in making its decision?

1. Compliance with regulations set forward by the Berlin Historic District Commission
2. Historic and architectural value
3. Architectural style
4. Scale, height and proportion of structures
5. Visibility of parking
6. Relationship to immediate neighbors with respect to architectural compatibility.
7. Relationship to the District as a whole, including materials, texture, architectural details, roof pitch and projections (porches, ells, etc).
8. Environmental factors include paving, fences, sidewalks, lighting fixtures, sheds and signs.

What about conflicts between health, safety, fire, building or handicapped regulations and the preservation of important architectural elements?

We adhere to State statutes. The commission will assist you with these issues.

How long will it take to get a decision?

After you submit your completed Application to the Building Department, it will be forwarded to the Commission for review and a Public Hearing. The Commission will hear the application at its next meeting provided that the application is submitted at least 14 days in advance of that meeting. You will receive notice of when your application will be heard. You or your representative must appear at the hearing to explain the project to the Commission. You may want to bring your builder or architect if your project is unusual or complex. The Commission will take action on each application within 65 days of its filing. Typically if the project is simple and all information is provided to the Commission, they can make a decision the night of the hearing.

Do I have any recourse if I do not agree with the decision?

Yes, you may revise an Application that has been denied without prejudice and resubmit it for approval at a later date. In some cases, the Commission may deny an application if they have not received enough details on which to make a decision. However, the property owner may take an appeal to the Superior Court serving the municipality within 15 days from the date the Commission rendered its decision.

How long is my Certificate of Appropriateness valid?

Your approval is valid for a period of one year. If the project takes longer, you will need to apply to the Commission for an extension. A representative of the Commission will visit the site to determine if work has been completed in accordance with the COA.

For full details on regulations, rules and procedures please refer to the **Town of Berlin Historic District Regulations (Revision 6-01-03)**. Copies can be obtained from the town's website: www.town.berlin.ct.us/

Berlin's Historic District Commission Mission Statement

To preserve, protect and identify the unique cultural and visual character of the town of Berlin by regulating the compatibility of new construction and alterations to existing buildings, structures, and sites within the designated Historic District, while serving as a resource regarding preservation, restoration, construction and education for all historic properties within the town.