

Neighborhood Heritage Area FAQ

How is this different from a Historic District?

A Heritage Neighborhood is much less restrictive than a Historic District. Attention is paid to maintaining the overall feel of the neighborhood, rather than regulations around window type/material, trim, siding, etc...

Who makes decisions about the Heritage Neighborhood?

An advisory committee is appointed by the Planning Board. Any interested person can apply to join the advisory committee. Residents of the neighborhood are encouraged to participate.

What are the boundaries of the area?

The boundaries will be determined by the advisory committee. They may choose to include the entire area covered by the Division of Historical Resources survey, or shrink or expand it somewhat. This differs from a Historic District where the boundaries are determined by the Town.

Why can't existing Town boards and committees provide these protections?

No existing State laws provide for this kind of protection. Town boards and committees have limited powers. For example, the Zoning board assures that what is built on a property follows the zoning for that area, but does not prevent a home from being torn down and a new one built in its place. The Historic District Committee rules for demolition only apply to properties in identified Historic Districts.

What will the regulations be?

The regulations will be drafted by the advisory committee with input from neighborhood residents. The proposed regulations will be presented to the Planning Board for approval.

Are there 'contributing' and 'non-contributing' buildings? Can owners opt in or out?

The neighborhood survey document describes buildings as either 'contributing' or 'non-contributing'. A contributing building is one that represents the heritage of Exeter over time. Once the district boundaries are set, all buildings will be considered

contributing. Building owners are not able to opt in or out once the boundaries are set. The committee can choose to alter boundaries at the request of property owners who would like to participate.

Do property owners receive a tax advantage for being within the boundaries of the Heritage Neighborhood?

There are no specific tax advantages for property owners. The main advantage is that the neighborhood will have some decision making power regarding demolition of homes and major architectural changes to properties, thus preserving the look and feel of a unique area of town.