

**Town of Sanbornton
New Hampshire**

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES**

As approved by The Historic District Commission:

Elizabeth Merry, Chair

Frances Belcher

Selectman Guy Giunta

Abigail Mercer

Linda Salatiello,

Franz Vail

August 2, 2011

Preamble

Pursuant to RS 673:4, and for the purpose of the preservation of structures and places of historic and architectural value, the preservation of the cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural history of the district, the conservation of property values in the district, fostering of civic beauty, strengthening of the local economy, and prompting the use of the historic district for education, pleasure, and welfare of the citizens of the Town, the following guidelines are adopted by the Sanbornton Historic District Commission.

Under the Town of Sanbornton Zoning Ordinance, Article 9, the Historical Preservation District, (referred to as the Sanbornton Historic District) outlines the requirements for any building, restoration or repair of dwellings, public buildings, home industries or home occupations plus signage, driveways, temporary structures and any features visible from the roadside. Standards and Guidelines plus Rules of Procedures complete the regulatory requirements.

The Historical Preservation District shall be an area surrounding Sanbornton Square, Bounded on the east by Parsonage Brook, on the north by the line of the Forest Conservation Area, on the west by Interstate 93, and of the south by the town line of Tilton **as indicated on the Zoning Map of Sanbornton, NH, 2011.**

II. Description of Sanbornton Historic District

The Sanbornton Historic District is located at Sanbornton Square, near the geographical center of the original land area of the township of Sanbornton, New Hampshire. The National Register Historic District coincides with a local historic district established in 1972. The district extends north and south along the central range road of the town, and also includes buildings and sites on a number of east-west roads that converge in this part of town. The terrain within the Historical Preservation District is gently rolling with good agricultural soils that formerly provided extensive pasturage and tillage and made Sanbornton one of the most productive farming towns in NH during the early nineteenth century. Some of the land near the Square remains unforested and under cultivation. In 1869, 10,000 acres was separated off from Sanbornton to create the town of Tilton. This division left the remaining portion of Sanbornton, in which the Historic District lies relatively undisturbed in its rural economy.

The architecture of Sanbornton Historic District is predominantly early nineteenth century in date and Federal in style. Most of the buildings in the district are of wood-frame construction, and most of the dwellings are covered with clapboards. The scale of all structures is small; the largest historical public buildings include: the Lane Tavern (c. 1810); the Woodman-Sanborn Academy (c. 1825); the Congregational Church (c. 1834); and the Town Hall (c. 1834). In addition to the houses and public structures in the Historic District that date before the Civil War, there are several new dwellings of a

more recent date; most of which are compatible in style and materials with the clapboarded wood-frame dwellings of an earlier era.

The buildings in the Sanbornton Historic District are clustered in and near Sanbornton Square. Some extend along the original north-south central range road of the township, while others are spaced along crossroads that converge at the Square. The combination of small structures, few fences/stone walls, adjoining fields, and a generally unforested terrain creates an open and agrarian feeling throughout the district. Sanbornton Square has only a small public area in front of the academy, Congregational Church, and Town Hall. Despite its name the Square never possessed a large town green or common.

Most of the structures in the Sanbornton Historic District are now residential and many are listed in the National Register of Historic Places (aka National Register). A list of the properties on the register and originally within the boundaries is attached in Appendix I). Apart from houses the district contains one former academy building (now the town library), one church, one town hall, a former tavern, two former stores, one bandstand, one town pound, one former blacksmith shop, plus newer structures including: one life safety building (Police and Fire Departments), one town office, one post office and one school.

The Sanbornton Historic District is distinctive from its surroundings in that it is the only village of substantial size within a township that is otherwise characterized by separate farms or very small hamlets. It was originally the center of the township and for over 200 years has been the seat of the government and, to a considerable extent, the focus of activity.

Because the Sanbornton Historic District has been the focus of community since the late eighteenth century, and because a number of structures that once stood in the area have since disappeared, the archaeological potential of the area is high. Among other sites, the Historic District includes the location of the original 1770 meetinghouse (removed c. 1834) and the original burying ground. The Rev. M. T. Runnels in his history of Sanbornton, NH, (1882) lists many former activities in Sanbornton Square which would have left archaeological remains; including several stores, potash manufactories, blacksmith and tinsmith shops, cooper and joiner shops, distilleries, printing and bookbinding office, harness and saddler shops, and a slaughter house. Much of the Sanbornton Historic District is rural in character and, therefore, exhibits a greater harmony between building groupings (ie. sheds, barns and outbuildings) and the surrounding land than exists in more densely settled areas. Similarly, a greater diversity of building groupings results from the rural character, and it is important that new construction be appropriate to its immediate surroundings as well as to the Historic District generally.

III. PRESERVATION OF THE OVERALL DISTRICT SETTING

Sanbornton's identity as a historic, rural village center, depends in large part upon its roadside trees, stonewalls, open space, vistas, road width, low lighting and the relationships of buildings to adjacent landscapes. Preserving these features is critical to maintaining Sanbornton Historic District's distinctive character. It is expected that each property owner will preserve and improve the aesthetic qualities of his/her property whether undeveloped, residential, or non-residential. All uses and properties within Sanbornton Historic District must harmoniously coexist with each other and should all contribute to the feel of a rural village.

As a principle the Sanbornton Historic District encourages sound environmental stewardship when building or modifying properties within the District.

Open Space and Vistas – Sanbornton is fortunate to have a number of open areas, all of which add greatly to the character of Sanbornton Historic District. Fields and scenic vistas or even glimpses from one road to another in Sanbornton Historic District remind us of our heritage. These spaces shall be maintained as is, whenever possible, with grass, scattered trees, shrubs, or agricultural fields. Property owners are to site new buildings or additions so that existing vistas are maintained whenever possible. Scenic Roads should be preserved whenever possible and others might be formally added to the list if approved at Town Meeting.

Streetscape – Sanbornton Historic District is a mixture of varied spacing between buildings, of lots with fences and lots without, of fields and forests, of small and large setbacks, of residential and non-residential uses, of larger and small homes, and of newer and older homes. Some similarities exist among groups of buildings, but significant differences also exist. Despite these differences with Sanbornton Historic District, there is a common feel throughout. The older homes of the community have, for the main part, influenced the development that has come later. The views through yards to other properties reveal the commonalities that these lots share. These features create a rhythm, flow, and balance among the properties within Sanbornton Historic District. This rhythm, flow and balance of mass with open space should be preserved and not interrupted with unusual amounts of blacktop, gaps of deep setbacks without a flow of fencing, shrubs or trees to carry the eye to the next building, or interrupted or blocked by disproportionately large or tall objects or structures.

Interruption to Streetscape by Man-made Objects. It is important that items such as aboveground swimming pools, tennis courts, riding rings, antennae, satellite dishes, solar panels, cell towers, windmills, temporary structures, and trash receptacles be sited to minimize their visual affect and shall be screened or concealed from view as much as possible. Any objects that are not in character with the Historic District and which are publicly visible may be required to be sited elsewhere, minimized, or concealed. Mailboxes shall be properly mounted on simple wood, granite, or black metal posts.

Roads – The Sanbornton Historic District Commission shall review any road changes proposed within the district. The impact of large areas of asphalt or cement is not in keeping with Sanbornton’s rural character. Where asphalt is necessary on driveways, softening the effect is recommended with stone dust, Portland dust, or chip seal. The use of planters and vegetation, cobbles, brick, or grass strips to define areas and break up large expanses of paving is to be encouraged.

Whenever possible no town road widths should be increased beyond existing dimensions, and intersections should not be widened unless safety is of concern. Scenic roads and their trees shall be preserved particularly on unpaved town roads. Road shoulders shall not be paved, but left as grass or, if necessary, gravel. Should new roads be created, they shall be visually softened. Parking on the streets of Sanbornton Historic District shall be in keeping with the Town Ordinance.

Off-Street Parking – All non-residential off-street parking shall, if paved, be visually softened and large areas broken aesthetically by planters, grass, brick or cobble areas. Driveways and parking areas shall be at the side of the residential properties and only in front of public buildings if other options do not exist. Refer also to Landscaping, Section IV.

Lighting – All fixtures shall be positioned pointing down and/or installed to prevent unwanted incidental illumination of abutting properties, streets and nighttime sky. Glare, direction, and light levels shall be reviewed. Lighting and fixtures shall be compatible with the scale, style, low illumination, and rural village character of Sanbornton Historic District.

Garage Structures- These structures shall be at the side or rear of the building which is in keeping with tradition. Please refer to Additions to Existing Structures or New Construction regarding size and appearance.

Change in Use – When zoning regulations permit a change in use, Sanbornton Historic District Commission is responsible for the external aesthetics connected with this change in use. Any changes to the exterior of the property or the parcel of land must be presented to Sanbornton Historic District Commission for approval.

Relocation – buildings shall be retained on their present sites whenever possible. Relocation shall be considered only as an alternative to demolition.

Demolition– Demolition of any building or any part of a building shall be avoided and all historically significant structures must be carefully evaluated for alternative solutions. If no alternative to demolition is found, then Sanbornton Historic District Commission shall authorize the issuance of a demolition permit if the following requirements are met:

- Structural instability or deterioration as evidenced by a technical report by a Registered Professional Engineer certified by the State of New Hampshire;
- EPA standards are met;
- Documentation of the structure's elevations and architectural features in measured drawings and photographs; and
- Recommendations from the planning board, fire chief, building inspector, health officer, and other administrative officials of the Town of Sanbornton as deemed necessary.

Temporary buildings and structures –

Definition: Temporary buildings and structures include any buildings not permanently attached to the ground. Some examples include, but are not limited to: Dog houses, wood storage units and coverings, garage car ports, etc. Structures that are erected or placed for not more than sixty (60) days, such as tents portable bandstands, bleachers, mobile home building used in conjunction with construction activity, tractor trailers and other similar structures shall comply with all building code and fire code requirements as well as any other *regulations*.

- **Location on lot:** these should be located behind the building if possible otherwise at its side.
Flexible units
- **Framed units with coverings:**
 - **Color:** Neutral, brown, grey or dark green that blends into the landscape, eg. No blue tarps.
 - **Height:** not more than 10 feet
- **Rigid frames, walls and roofs**
 - These should adhere to the standards and guidelines relating to other permanent structures in the District;
- **Completion:** Any temporary building must be completed within 6 months of Approval. A completed structure shall have an exterior finished with siding (non vinyl), trim, paint (or stained) and finished roof. Plywood exteriors, and/or tarpaper or building wrap is not acceptable nor is ice and water shielding as a finished material.
- Mobile units, including but not limited to: campers/trailers, motor homes and RVs must be in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance of the town article 4e.

Building Change Impacts: The impact that the applicant's proposal will have on the Sanbornton Historic District and the extent to which it will preserve and enhance the historical, architectural, and cultural qualities of the Sanbornton Historic District and the community shall be considered a vital part of the application.

IV STANDARDS FOR BUILDING MODIFICATIONS

The Sanbornton Historic District is comprised of buildings that span the time from 1770 to the present day. Each building is distinctly different and conveys both its own history and a piece of the story of Sanbornton. Similarly, alterations to a single building impact not only the architectural character of that structure but also the overall character and integrity of the entire district.

Walls and Trim – The buildings in the Sanbornton Historic District are defined by the prevalence of wood used for clapboards, shingles, and trim. To retain this character, it is important that painted wooden clapboards which match those existing continue to be the material used, whenever possible, when replacing deteriorated clapboard siding. It is preferred that these details are consistent with the architectural style of the building. Exterior trim such as corner boards, door and window casings, cornices, etc. play an important role in the appearance and proportions of a buildings. All trim that contributes to the historic character of a building should be retained and preserved whenever possible.

If necessary to replace all or portions of such features, replacements shall match that which has been removed in terms of material, design, proportion, and placement. As much of the original feature as possible shall be repaired rather than replaced. If using the same kind of material is not feasible, a compatible material may be considered. It is not appropriate to install trim that relates to another period or different building style.

Siding and Trim – The predominant siding in Sanbornton Historic District is wood, and is the preferred siding material. Vinyl siding is not acceptable. The use of alternatives that are available on the market, which look similar to wood may offer an alternative option.

Close attention should be given to the trim details around windows and doors and at building corners, fascia and eaves. These details should be consistent with other buildings in Sanbornton Historic District.

Painting, Staining, and Color – When removing old paint from a historic building, it is usually necessary to remove only the damaged or deteriorated paint to the next layer. Hand scraping or hand sanding are the preferred methods to avoid damaging the woodwork. Heat guns, hot-air guns, or chemical strippers can be used to remove paint when entire layers are so deteriorated that total removal is necessary. Sandblasting, water blasting, or the use of torches is not recommended as they can cause irreversible damage. Paint and stain colors shall be appropriate for the building's style, taking into account any prior modifications that are an integral part of the building's history. Colors shall be chosen using the color guide and palettes referenced below.

Color Guide and Color Palettes – Property owners are required to register their color choices when they submit applications for approval. The Sanbornton Historic District Commission has adopted The Old-House Journal Guide to Restoration as a color guide for historical buildings. The National Trust for Historic Preservation has partnered with

Lowe's and developed a palette featuring over 250 historic colors. Please see: www.preservationnation.org/about-us/partners/corporate-partners/valspar/paint.html. Further color palettes are available from Benjamin Moore, Sherwin Williams and Pratt and Lambert. Paint and stain colors shall be chosen from historical color palettes. Other colors may be approved by the Sanbornton Historic District Commission upon request and will be approved if it finds that the colors are historically accurate and appropriate for the building's age and style. (E.g. White with forest green trim on public buildings). Paint sheen shall be a low-luster, eggshell, or low-gloss satin finish.

Roofs, Chimneys, and Fixtures – Roofs are an important design element of historic buildings and the shape of an existing, historic roof shall not be altered. Approval must be received from the Commission regarding color, type, and size of any new roofing material. Wooden shingles are the most historically appropriate for rural 18th and 19th century buildings. Natural materials are preferred, but if asphalt shingles are selected, architectural shingles that imitate wood and slate in a dark color are preferable. Snow belts (metal roofing along eaves) are allowable, but should be copper (preferred) or a dark, anodized aluminum for minimal impact.

Skylights that are visible from the public right-of-way are not desirable. Low profile skylights may be approved if they do not interrupt a significant roofline. In lieu of skylights, small gabled or shed-roof dormers are more appropriate.

Chimneys are also an important feature of historic buildings and should be retained. Chimneys in poor condition shall be rebuilt, rather than removed. Any new or reconstructed chimneys shall be appropriately sized, positioned and constructed to appear historically functional.

Miscellaneous fixtures: Television antennae, satellite dishes, solar collectors and other objects affixed to the roof shall be installed on the rear of the building, or a minimally visible slope of a roof and be of the smallest size practical. The visual impact of electrical wires and meters shall be minimized (i.e., placed at side or rear of building where possible). As well, if possible, wire should be buried and meters shall not be placed on the primary façade of a building, but rather located so as not to limit access by public service personnel. Generators, air conditioners and other external units shall be placed on the rear or sides of the buildings.

Windows and Doors – Windows are an essential part of the design of any building. Replacement windows shall follow the building's historic fenestration pattern, including opening, size, placement, and type of sash, mullions and muntions. Replacement lights shall not be smaller, of another period, or inappropriate for the building. Historic photographs may be available at the Sanbornton Town Library to help in determining the appearance of historic sashes and the date the sashes were installed; small-paned windows were often replaced in the late 19th and early 20th centuries with 2-over-2 or 2-over-1 sashes. In such cases reverting to a smaller paned sash is neither necessary nor always recommended. True divided-pane windows are preferred.

The size, shape, and frequency of doors and windows shall be consistent with other buildings in the area. The predominant window in Sanbornton Historic District is a double hung window with true divided lights. These windows are available from many manufacturers with the most efficient energy specifications. Roof windows (skylights) or casement windows are usually not appropriate for Sanbornton Historic District. Wood framing is preferred and vinyl is discouraged. Storm windows are appropriate for historic buildings, but their meeting rails should line up with the primary sash and the tops shall match the shape of primary sash. Storm windows shall be painted the color of the primary sash. If a factory finish is used, its color shall approximate the color of the primary sash.

If authentic exterior wood blinds (shutters) have remained with the building, they shall be maintained. Exterior blinds of metal or synthetic materials are not recommended as substitutes since they are often not sized properly and their appearance is not authentic.

Entrances and Porches – Entrances are usually the focal point of the buildings in Sanbornton Historic District and an integral component of design. Features such as fanlights, sidelights, pilasters, entablatures, and granite steps should be retained. If replacement due to deterioration is necessary, the features should be faithfully replicated. If the entrance to a barn is modified, the size and location of the historic opening shall remain clearly apparent. One preference is to leave the door where it is and make the entrance elsewhere, another to keep the proportions of the original door or to insert a false door. Storms and screens shall be painted to match doors and compliment the primary door in design. Painting of the fanlights, sidelights, pilasters, etc. should keep to the original color scheme as much as possible.

Any porches considered an integral parts of the building's history shall be maintained and preserved if possible. Missing features such as balusters, posts or balustrades shall be carefully replicated when replacement is necessary. When an open porch is to be screened, the screens and frames shall be installed behind the posts and railing so that the historic details remain fully visible to the public eye.

New Additions to Existing Buildings – In the design of an addition to a historic building, the scale, size, and materials of the addition shall neither overwhelm nor obscure the significant historic materials and features of the historic building. Additions shall be placed onto secondary elevations; the preferred choice is usually on the rear or an inconspicuous side. If the buildings consist of a main house, ell, and attached barn, the proportional relationship shall not be lost in the course of building an addition. Generally the addition should not try to mimic the historic building, but should reflect it in terms of scale, massing and overall proportions. A traditional design and tradition materials will usually be most suitable within the Sanbornton Historic District. Roof shapes, building height, materials, fenestration and doors are key design issues. They shall be compatible with the historic building and any previous addition. Moldings and other details might be simplified in the addition, both to make clear distinction between

the old and new and to keep the addition secondary to the historic building. Professional design services are highly recommended for a major addition and old photographs should be used to maintain the integrity of the original structure as much as possible.

New Porches and Decks – Designs for new porches shall follow either a historic porch that has since been removed or be a new design that is compatible with the historic character of the building. Porches were often appended to earlier buildings in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Closely spaced lattice is an appropriate screening method for the structure. Though pressure-treated lumber is recommended, all exposed sections shall be painted to match the trim or color of the building. New decks shall be located off secondary elevations and painted to match porch deck and building trim.

Ramps – Modifications to historic building for barrier-free access shall accommodate both the needs of disabled people and the historic characteristics of the building. Whenever possible, ramps should be located so as not to obscure or cause the removal of historic features and placed where possible at side or rear entrances if this meets building codes. Simple wooden or iron pipe railings are usually appropriate. Exposed wooden elements shall be considered trim and painted to match the trim color of the building. Removal of ramps is encouraged when they are no longer needed.

Fences: Fencing and stone walls should be in keeping with the period of the building and should consider the fencing of the neighboring properties. The purpose of fencing must be clearly defined when applying for approval. Acceptable reasons include aesthetic, protection, and privacy. Acceptable styles must be compatible with the period of the building. A variety of incompatible connecting fences is discouraged. Chain link and woven wood fencing are considered inappropriate. Fences shall be no more than 4 feet in height and may not obstruct road or pedestrian traffic. See photographs in the Public Library for what is considered historic fencing styles and materials. Hedges are appropriate if a barrier exceeding 4 feet is required.

Landscaping: The intent is to preserve and enhance the aesthetic qualities of the Sanbornton Historic District by establishing landscape design guidelines and options which work in relation to the intensity of the proposed land use with the following objectives:

- diminish potentially adverse impacts of structures, lighting, glare, noise, wind and odors;
- ensure adequate buffers between neighboring parcels of land to protect property values;
- promote an aesthetically pleasing relationship between scale of buildings and surroundings; and
- reinforce the visual image of the community

Stone Walls and Boundaries – Historical and traditional markings for property boundaries and grounds such as walls and tree borders shall be preserved. Stonewalls shall be retained in place and maintained. They shall not be moved or removed except for good cause shown. Replications or extensions of stone walls may be made if deemed appropriate.

V. New Construction

General – Sanbornton Historic District is a designated area unique because of its significance and place in American history and new building designs are expected to be consistent with existing structures. Please refer to section III. Building Exteriors for additional guidance.

New buildings in Sanbornton Historic District shall be held to the same standards as changes to existing buildings; construction that will preserve and safeguard the scale, design, aesthetic, cultural, and historic features of Sanbornton Historic District. New buildings face the additional challenge of having to minimize the impact they will make by reducing portions of open space, which is a valued asset of the community. It is expected that new buildings in Sanbornton Historic District will respect the fact that Sanbornton is a rural community whose architecture consists primarily of traditional shapes and that the new structure will fit comfortably with the existing structures. Stylistic elements on new construction which do not relate to existing elements on historic buildings in Sanbornton Historic District shall generally be disallowed.

All new construction within Sanbornton Historic District shall be designed with the goals of enhancing the appearance of existing buildings by being consistent with those buildings in terms of rhythm, siting, scale, architectural features and materials.

Siting – New Structures shall be located so as to be consistent with the setback of the buildings nearest to them, thereby preserving views up and down the street with a consistent façade of building fronts. In order to accomplish this, Sanbornton Historic District Commission may recommend that the Zoning Board of Adjustment allow variances from the Town’s front setback requirements.

Scale – New structures shall be in harmony with the mass, scale, and proportion of adjacent buildings.

Architectural Features – New structures shall not introduce architectural features that are inconsistent with other buildings in the area that are of 18th/19th century Federal Architectural style. The shape of the building, pitch of the roof, size of dormers, presentation of gables to or away from the street, must be appropriate to the architectural styles nearby.

Windows and Doors – See page 8

Siding and Trim – See page 7

Color – See pages 7 & 8

VI. NON-RESIDENTIAL USES

Businesses and other non-residential users within the Sanbornton Historic District are subject to the same conditions and regulations as other users within the Sanbornton Historic District, as well as the pertinent zoning regulations set forth in the Sanbornton zoning ordinance.

VI. SIGNAGE: *SECTION UNDER CONSTRUCTION. TBD.*

VII. TOWN OWNED AND CHURCH PROPERTIES

These guidelines shall apply equally to all properties located within the Sanbornton Historic District whether such properties are privately or publicly owned.