



SOUTHBOROUGH HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Before planning to demolish a structure in the Town of Southborough, in whole or in part, here are some important things to keep in keep in mind.

Southborough in 2016 enacted a Demolition Delay Bylaw that may place a demolition delay on “Any building, in whole or in part, which was constructed prior to 1925 and is included in the Southborough Massachusetts Historic Properties Survey prepared by the Commission in 2000 (with revisions and updates in 2015) on file with the Town Clerk’s office.”

It is the homeowner’s responsibility to ascertain whether or not their property is subject to the bylaw. You may check online [HERE](#), or inquire directly with the Southborough Historical Commission at historical@southboroughma.com. Substantial penalties may be incurred through failure to comply with the bylaw. The text of the law may be found [HERE](#).

For the purposes of the ByLaw, the Commission has determined that “total or substantial exterior destruction” is defined as any change that will permanently alter any façade of an historically significant structure viewable from any public way by more than XX%.

The purview of the Historical Commission extends only to the exterior of the structure. Interior renovations are not subject to SHC review, but of course require appropriate permitting from the Building Commissioner and other Town departments.

Some commonly asked questions:

I have a property listed in the Massachusetts Historic Properties Survey: Do I need to Historical Commission permission to:	
Paint my house a different color?	NO
Replace my windows or doors?	NO (though we would suggest looking at historically appropriate styles)
Build an addition or add a garage?	NO
Alter the interior in any way?	NO
Remove a tower, porch or gable on the front of my house?	YES
Tear down a wing of my house viewable from a public way?	YES
Permanently alter any street façade by more than XX%?	YES
Demolish any listed structure entirely?	YES

Questions? We’re happy to help. Email us: historical@southboroughma.com



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Fact Sheet for Owners Requesting Demolition of Listed Properties

INTENT AND PURPOSE

The Demolition Delay Bylaw is enacted for the purpose of protecting and preserving significant buildings and structures within the Town of Southborough which constitute or reflect distinctive features of the architectural or historical resources of the Town, and to encourage owners of such buildings and structures to seek out alternative options to preserve, rehabilitate or restore such buildings rather than to demolish them, thereby promoting the public welfare and preserving the cultural heritage of the Town.

In accordance with the demolition delay Bylaw, property owners requesting a demolition permit on a listed property will be sent an action plan. This plan must be completed in full to ensure you have made "*continuing, bona fide, and reasonable efforts*" to conform to provisions of the bylaw. It is the obligation of the owner to submit a proactive plan to work with the Historical Commission either to preserve the property, in whole or in part, or find another buyer willing to do so. In order to guide you through the process and outline your responsibilities, the following action plan has been developed.

ACTION PLAN SPECIFICS

The following documentation must be submitted as a PDF electronic packet to the Chair of the Southborough Historical Commission in order to consider your demolition request. Under normal circumstances, the Commission would expect the applicant to assemble and submit this information within 30 days of initiating a Demolition Permit Application with the Town. **Incomplete or partial submissions will not be considered and will extend the delay.**

1. STATEMENT OF REASONS

Please list your main reasons for wishing to demolish the property. For each reason, please supply an estimate by a licensed contractor or engineer to remediate each issue: i.e sills and foundation are crumbling and will require \$XXK to repair; the house needs new windows-\$YYK; the house needs new heating/cooling systems \$ZZK etc.

2. REDEVELOPMENT PLANS

Please provide all plans and documentation for future development that have been submitted to any board or commission in the Town of Southborough, or that you plan to submit over the next calendar year. Plans must include major elevations of the revised building detailing its width, height, depth and setbacks along with all improvements visible

from any public way (including but not limited to walkways, driveways, fences, swimming pools, etc.) to be completed for the site. The Commission requires that no demolition permit can be issued by the Building Inspector on a building/structure found by the Historical Commission to be historically or architecturally significant until all permits and approvals for use and development of the property have been obtained and issued from all other town boards. Any material change, as solely determined by the Historical Commission, in the development and/or preservation plan during the evaluation process or the delay period may require, at the sole discretion of the Historical Commission, the process to restart.

3. PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION

The following must be provided in support of this Bylaw review for your property:

The most recent **TAX ASSESSMENT** of the property.

A REAL ESTATE/MORTGAGE APPRAISAL not more than three months old.

A SET of PHOTOGRAPHS of the property and surrounding areas and properties affected by the proposed demolition with a resolution of at least 300 DPI must be submitted. Each photograph must be captioned with the address of the property and the date the photograph was taken. All photographs must be keyed to a plot plan (see below) to provide a thorough location description. Slides and/or a PowerPoint presentation may be added (but not substituted for the required photographs) at the Commission hearing.

A MAP containing the location of the property affected by the proposed demolition must be submitted with this application. An 8-½"x11" portion of an assessor's street map showing the property will be sufficient.

A PLOT PLAN - A plot plan showing (1) the current building/structure footprint, (2) the structure or portion thereof sought to be demolished, (3) the dimensions of the building/structure, and (4) any requested changes to the footprint or building location.

SIGNATURES and/or PROOF OF OWNERSHIP - All applications for demolition delay review must be submitted and signed by the owner of record of the property as the applicant. Proof of ownership must also be submitted with the application evidenced by a copy of the current deed to the property showing the applicant's name and/or ownership interest. If the owner wishes a third party to represent him/her before the Commission, a notarized power of attorney must be submitted with the application.

Once the above materials have been gathered, the Commission will meet and review the materials. If upon such the Commission decides that the structure has fallen into such

decrepitude that cannot be restored, the Commission may vote to allow the demolition to proceed. If, however, there is a reasonable possibility for restoration, either by the applicant or other parties, the demolition delay process will continue.

4. SHOULD THE APPLICANT BE UNWILLING TO CONSIDER RENOVATION

Should the applicant be unwilling to restore the property, the applicant must prove that he or she has made *bona fide* efforts to find an alternative buyer before a demolition order will be granted. These must include the name and contact information of a licensed real estate broker, along with a letter to the broker from the owner of record instructing him or her to share all information with the Southborough Historical Commission regarding the sales efforts on the property, including, but not limited to: names and contact information for all people attending showings; details of the marketing/listing campaign for the property; and all offers made on the property. **The active sales effort for the property may under no circumstances be less than 120 days.**

NOTE: If the Commission finds that the applicant or his/her agents are not making good faith effort to find an alternative to demolition of the property, the process will halt and will not restart until the Historical Commission decides reasonable good faith efforts are being made, as determined by the facts and circumstances of each individual case.

5. NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

The Demolition Delay Bylaw calls for the Historical Commission to notify the Building Commissioner in writing of any determination within five business days of a hearing that reviews an affected property.

Questions? We're here to help. Please email: historical@southboroughma.com. (Note: due to Massachusetts Open Meeting Law requirements we are unable to answer questions via phone or text. All questions must be addressed in person at a Commission meeting or via email.