

What are Riverhead's historic and scenic resources?

- Many beautiful nineteenth century buildings downtown, along Main Street and in the residential districts to the north.
- Neighborhoods of historic structures in hamlets such as South Jamesport, Jamesport, Aquebogue and Wading River.
- Hundreds of landmark-eligible homes, farm buildings and other structures scattered in rural areas throughout the town.

How is a landmark or historic district designated?

Nomination: Anyone can nominate a landmark or district for designation. Simply fill out the Landmark Nomination Form and submit it to the Commission. The Commission can also institute the process on its own

Designation: Commission will review all nominated buildings and districts to determine eligibility and make recommendations to the Town Board. The Town Board officially declares both individual landmarks and historic districts, after appropriate notifications and public hearings.

What happens once a structure or district is designated?

- Building Department notifies Commission of permit requests.
- Owners of individual landmarks or structures within historic districts do not face any additional notification requirements. Rather, the Building Department maintains a map showing all designated landmarks and historic districts. Whenever a property owner requests a building or demolition permit for a designated structure or one in a historic district, the Building Department automatically notifies the Commission.
- Commission has 60 days to approve, modify or disapprove application.
- Town Board may call a hearing to review Commission actions.

What Landmarks have been designated in Riverhead?

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National Register of Historic Places (5 sites)
Riverhead Town Landmarks (40 sites)
Sound Avenue Scenic & Historic Corridor
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The Landmarks Preservation Commission

The Landmarks Preservation Commission consists of up to seven members, appointed by the Town Board. If possible, the Commission is to include an architect, an architectural historian and a member of the bar. Members serve terms of three years.

The commission meets on a monthly basis, normally on the fourth Monday of each month at 4:00 in Town Hall. All meetings are open to the public.

Commission Members

Richard Wines - Chair	722-5170
Peter Lucas - Vice Chair	722-3210
Nancy Gilbert	722-5170
Miles Kucera	929-6804
Gary Jacquemin	369-8630
Laurel Sisson	727-4874
Thomas Sledjeski	727-8812

Town of Riverhead

Phil Cardinale -	Supervisor
Barbara Blass -	Councilwoman
George Bartunek -	Councilman
Ed Densieski -	Councilman
Rose Sanders -	Councilwoman

Riverhead Landmarks Preservation Commission

Landmarks Preservation in Riverhead

What, Why and How



Riverhead Landmarks Preservation Commission
200 Howell Avenue, Riverhead, New York 11901
631-727-3200

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Why Have Historic Districts and Landmarks?

Riverhead Has a Rich Past.

We are fortunate to have many surviving buildings from all eras – ranging from the turn-of-the-century commercial buildings in the downtown core to the many 18th and 19th century houses scattered in rural and village settings throughout the town. Unfortunately, this heritage is disappearing rapidly. For instance, of the twenty historic structures identified along the Sound Avenue Scenic and Historic corridor at the time of the Bicentennial celebration, six are already gone. Intense development pressure in the last few years has made the situation even more urgent. Without special attention, our cultural

heritage, our unique architecture and areas of historic value spanning the last three centuries could be lost forever.

In 1975, the Riverhead Town Board adopted a Landmarks Preservation ordinance for the “conservation, protection and preservation” of sites and structures in the town “of special historical significance or which by reason of famous events, the antiquity or uniqueness of architectural construction and design are of particular significance to the heritage of our town.” This ordinance, Chapter 73 of the town code, established the Landmarks Preservation Commission and enabled the designation of landmark sites and structures as well as historic districts that encompass a number of landmark-quality structures.

Building a Rich Future: Benefits of Landmark Designation

Assures future preservation - Basically, a historic structure that is designated as a landmark or is part of a historic district cannot be significantly altered or demolished without the review by the Commission. In addition, the designation of historic sites and districts enhances their visibility. Consequently, owners are more likely to take appropriate actions to preserve and restore their properties. Moreover, the community is more likely to appreciate the need for special consideration for historic structures.

Creates “special” places - Throughout Long Island and the rest of the country, the designation of historic districts and landmarks has created special places where people want to live, work and visit.

Encourages investment - Property owners are more likely to invest in restoration and improvements when they have some assurance that the owners of neighboring structures are likely to take similar appropriate steps.

Increases property values - Several studies demonstrate that the designation of landmarks and historic districts increases property values.

Produces Federal tax benefits - Federal tax credits of up to 20% are available for the costs of appropriately renovating income-producing properties.

May result in local tax abatement - Section 444-a of New York State’s Real Property Tax Law, adopted in 1998, allows municipalities to offer a property tax abatement program that freezes any increase in assessments that otherwise could result from rehabilitation work on structures that are locally designated landmarks or in designated historic districts. Riverhead’s new Master Plan recommends that the town adopt this tax abatement program.

Creates more jobs - Studies show that the same amount spent on renovation of historical structures creates more jobs, especially local jobs, than does new construction. Renovation is generally a more labor-intensive process whereas in new construction more of the budget goes to the purchase of materials produced elsewhere.

Makes restoration advice available - The Commission can provide or obtain advice for property owners on how they can best restore or rehabilitate their historic structures.



What designation does not do in Riverhead

Does not restrict the color you can paint your front door. Approval by the Commission is only required for alterations that normally require a building permit.

Does not create economic hardships. The code contains provisions for granting hardship provisions if the “strict application “ of the code would result in “unnecessary” economic hardship.

Does not dictate architectural styles. Ideally, new buildings in a historic district will compliment the architectural style of the district. However, this does not limit new construction to mere replication of historic styles. Indeed, the Commission may approve any new construction that it deems in the best interests of the district.

Does not regulate ordinary maintenance and repair. The code specifically excludes ordinary maintenance from its provisions.

Does not impact interior alterations. The Commission only has jurisdiction over exterior features that are visible from a public way.