



City of Saratoga Springs

Site Details & Streetscapes

Historic District Design Guidelines

Historic buildings do not stand alone; they are one component within the neighborhood fabric. Streetscapes, and their relationship to buildings, are another important element of the neighborhood.

Unique streetscape details, such as decorative fencing, brick or slate sidewalks, and mature trees, contribute to the historic neighborhood fabric and should be preserved. Streetscape details the following features: streets, pedestrian walks and curbs, driveways and off-street parking, fences, utilities, trash enclosures and landscaping.

STREETS, CURBS AND SIDEWALKS

- Brick, granite, slate or concrete curbs and gutters, and original or historic sidewalks should be preserved. If repair is required, materials should match the existing in size, color, texture and tooling. Paving or patching of sidewalks with asphalt is not appropriate. City construction standards for new sidewalks are available at: www.saratoga-springs.org.
- Maintain the existing width of neighboring sidewalks.

DRIVEWAYS AND OFF-STREET PARKING

- Driveways and alleys should be used to access side and rear parking areas and garages.
- Paved areas and curb cuts should be kept to a minimum. New driveways and off-street parking should be designed and located to minimize the view from the street and to maximize greenspace.
- Avoid obstructing the view of the primary façade of a historic structure when locating new driveways and off-street parking. If parking must be placed in a highly visible location, screening is recommended. If a driveway or parking must be located adjacent to a historic structure, it is recommended that a green strip be placed in-between the structure and the paving material to avoid water damage and drainage issues.
- New driveways and parking areas should be constructed of materials that are compatible with the historic character of the surrounding area. Grass pavers or crushed stone are possible alternatives.

FENCES

Fences form a separation between public and private spaces and can provide a strong sense of continuity for the streetscape. Any fence over 36" located in the front yard set-back requires Design Review Commission approval.

- Original or historic fences should be preserved. If replacement is unavoidable, materials should match the original in size, scale, and design.
- Reestablishing fences that were historically present is encouraged. Every effort should be made to replicate it in both design and materials.
- New fences should be consistent with the historic style and period of the house in both design and materials.
- Recommended fencing materials for contributing or significant properties include wood picket, wrought iron and cast iron. Vinyl, PVC, and chain link are to be avoided.
- Front yard fences, located closest to the street, are most visible and should have an appropriate scale and relationship to the front porch, front yard and building.
- Fencing styles on the same property should be consistent. Avoid mixing fencing styles and materials.
- Fencing designs and materials should be consistent with the age of the historic or contributing structure. Contemporary fences, if used, should be reserved for areas not visible from the street or to the rear of the property.
- When placing a fence that has only one finished side, the finished side of the fence should present to the outside. The side with structural members should face the interior of the property.

Fences Continued

- Privacy fences are to be avoided in the front yard and are most appropriate to screen parking areas, mechanical equipment, pools and other features in rear and side yards. The design of privacy wood fences should be consistent with the materials and design of the adjacent buildings and fences.
- Fences are not permitted to exceed 6 feet in height in most areas. Eight feet may be permitted in commercial and industrial districts and on boundaries between residential and non-residential districts.
- For additional information regarding fencing requirements please refer to the see the City Zoning Ordinance at www.saratoga-springs.org.

SATELLITE DISHES / MECHANICALS

- It is preferable to locate satellite dishes and antennas so they are not visible from the public right-of-way. Installation in the front yard is to be avoided. Screening is encouraged if located in the side yard. If placing on historic or contributing building, install it in a less visible location from the street and so that it does not negatively impact the historic character of the structure.
- Smaller satellites are encouraged so to minimize their visual impact.
- Multiple antennas should be combined, if possible, to minimize visual impact.
- Care should be taken to preserve and not damage architectural details during installation.
- Locating mechanical systems in the front yard is to be avoided. If unavoidable, the units should be screened to minimize the visual impact and in a manner that is appropriate to the historic character of the surrounding area. It is preferable to locate mechanical units in the rear yard. A unit may be placed in the side yard with appropriate screening.
- The location of vents and mechanical connects through historic foundations or walls should be limited to side or rear elevations to minimize their visual impact.

ACCESSIBILITY RAMPS

- If an accessibility ramp is needed, the ramp should be designed so that it can be removed in the future.
- The ramp should not irreparably destroy, cover or alter historic details of the building.
- Both temporary and permanent ramps should complement the architectural style of the historic structure.

TRASH CONTAINERS / DUMPSTERS

- The location of dumpsters or trash containers in the front yard or side yard is to be avoided. They should be installed to the rear of the building or property and be screened from view with either fencing or plantings.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Carriage step blocks and hitching posts are unique historical features and should be preserved.

For more information on site and area requirements, see the City Zoning Ordinance at www.saratoga-springs.org.

City of Saratoga Springs
Design Review Commission
Office of Planning & Economic Development
474 Broadway, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
(518) 587-3550 / www.saratoga-springs.org

Historic District Design Guidelines were produced in partnership with the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation: (518) 587-5030 / www.saratogapreservation.org. This material has been partially financed with federal funds from the National Park Service (NPS), Department of the Interior (DOI). However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior. The activity has been administered by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation. This program receives Federal funds from the NPS. Regulations of the DOI strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental Federally Assisted Programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or handicap. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility operated by a recipient of Federal assistance should write to: Director, Equal Opportunity Program, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, P.O. 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013