



Old North Church 1828

The Canaan Historic District, the first historic district in New Hampshire in a town without a zoning ordinance, was first established in 1968.

Summary of Regulations

Buildings may not be erected, reconstructed, altered, restored, moved nor demolished without approval of the Commission. A change of use (such as seasonal to year-round, single to multi-family, residential to commercial, etc.) also requires approval. Repairs and interior alteration do not require approval, so long as the exterior appearance and the building usage remain unchanged. Commission approval is required before a building permit is issued.

- Architecture consistent with that of the period 1780—1850
- Minimum roof pitch: 25 degrees
- Historic appearance to windows and doors
- Maximum height: 35 feet
- Siding: Wood or cement-fiber clapboards, stone, wood shingles, board and batten
- Roof shingles: Dark asphalt, slate or wood
- Dark snow belts
- White paint preferred, but many historic colors allowed by regulations
- Maximum four-foot fence
- Fences of stone, wood rail or wood picket
- Brick chimneys
- Unobtrusive or hidden antennae
- Regulated signs only
- Minimum two-acre lots
- Minimum setback from lot line: 30 feet
- Main building 50 feet from lake
- Multi-family dwelling unit: 700 square feet min.

See regulations, located at Town Hall or on website, for specific requirements and application.

Canaan Historic District Commission
603.523.4501
**[http://canaannh.org/boards/
historic_district_commission](http://canaannh.org/boards/historic_district_commission)**

Welcome To the Canaan Historic District Canaan, NH



Canaan Meeting House 1793



**Welcome to Canaan's
beautiful Historic District and
our friendly neighborhood**

Most of the houses in this district date from the Greek Revival and Federal periods. The District extends along Canaan Street from 330 to 577 Canaan Street. It extends on the east side of the Street to the lake, and on the west side of the Street, for 500 feet. All properties in the District must abide by the Historic District regulations. State mandated penalties are imposed for noncompliance.

**The Canaan Historic District
Commission was established for the
following purposes:**

- I. To preserve the District in the municipality which reflects elements of its cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural history
- II. To conserve property values in the District
- III. To foster civic beauty
- IV. To strengthen the local economy
- V. To promote the use of the Historic District for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the citizens of the municipality

A Rich History

The district's major edifice, the meetinghouse, was erected in 1792. Canaan Street homes were stops on the underground railroad, and in 1835 Noyes Academy was established. This Academy was the first-known upper-level co-ed school in the US open to African Americans.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I know what restrictions are placed on changes to my property?

Copies of the CHDC regulations are available at the Town Hall or the website.

Do I need to submit an application for all changes to my property?

Exterior changes must be submitted unless exempted by the regulations. Interior changes are not regulated. Please read the regulations carefully or call for information.

Are recreational vehicles allowed?

There are specific usage periods and setback requirements.

May I paint my home any color that seems historic to me?

No application is required if the color is listed in the CHDC regulations. These colors are found on the Historic New England color chart, copies of which are located at the Town Hall and in the Canaan Library. Application is required for other colors.

How can I reach a CHDC member?

They are appointed by the selectmen to staggered three year terms. Call the Town Office for names and phone numbers of current members or check the website.