

## Concord Heritage Commission

### HERITAGE SIGN PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION

#### Purpose

All buildings in Concord are a part of our heritage, regardless of the age of a building or its use. To encourage appreciation and enhance the historic character of our built environment, Concord/Penacook Owners are encouraged to research and document their building's history and request approval for a Heritage Sign to commemorate the building's origins, events, or significance.

#### Suggested Heritage Sign Information: Discover and Document any of the following items:

- Owner who built the building
- Date of building construction
- Later owner(s) or occupant(s)
- Events associated with building
- Building use: residential? commercial? office? bakery? haberdashery? club, etc.
- Architect who designed the building
- First owner(s) or occupant(s)
- Occupation of owner
- Building's architectural style

#### Application Process for a Building Owner: the 'Applicant'

1. Complete and sign all 3 pages marked 'APPLICATION,' including a proposed Sign Template.
2. Attach copies of all source materials supporting the proposed sign text and dates.
3. Submit the completed application, with the application fee of \$10.00 (cash or check payable to the City of Concord) to:

Concord Heritage Commission, c/o Planning Division,  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, City Hall,  
41 Green Street,  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

4. The Heritage Sign Program Review Committee reviews an application for completeness and reliability.  
*NOTE: It is important that the application include copies or photos of references, source materials that support the proposed text shown on the sign template.*
5. The Chair of the Heritage Sign Program Review Committee will notify the Applicant(s) with questions, if any, and the approval status of the application.
6. Note: The Heritage Sign Program Review Committee does not research the building and does not guarantee the accuracy of the requested sign text and dates.

#### Research Guidelines for a Heritage Sign:

1. A Heritage Sign may reflect the name of the original or most significant building owner and year/s of occupation. In many cases, this will be the first owner. However, if the original owner lived on-site for only a few years, a subsequent or more prominent owner may be more appropriate to commemorate.
2. If two owners were prominent, primary building occupants, it may make sense to hyphenate the two last names, e.g., Abbot-Jones House.
3. To avoid confusion, it may be appropriate to use the first name of the significant owner: e.g., Nathan Abbot House.

4. Non-residential, commercial buildings may have names associated with or on the building.
5. The Heritage Sign may be used to commemorate any building or historic site within the city limits of Concord, including Penacook, regardless of the age of the building.
6. Signs may contain a neighborhood name as designated by the Heritage Sign Program Review Committee.
7. To assist research of your building, two documents from the Sign Program provide search suggestions: *Local and Internet Historical Resources* with info on “Get Started/Troubleshooting Workshops” held twice a year at the Concord Room, Concord Public Library; and *Researching the History of a Building in Concord, NH*, prepared by Preservation Consultant, Elizabeth Durfee Hengen

**Questions?** Contact the Heritage Sign Review Committee regarding your building search by emailing [planning@concordnh.gov](mailto:planning@concordnh.gov) with the subject line: “Heritage Sign Question”

### **Heritage Sign Production:**

Once approved by the Heritage Sign Review Committee (the ‘Committee’), the Applicant will receive a letter containing the Committee’s signed Original Sign Template and directions for next steps. The Committee will also notify the designated Signmaker, Advantage Signs, with a copy of the approved Original Sign Template.

The Applicant will need to contact the Signmaker directly with their approved Original Sign Template and arrange for sign payment and manufacture. The Signmaker will confirm the actual manufacture cost and estimated production time. Wooden signs generally take several weeks to produce, while metal signs may take longer. The Applicant may request the Signmaker to install the Heritage Sign at Applicant’s cost.

### **Heritage Sign Placement:**

The Approved Heritage Sign should be placed on the Owner’s building in a location visible from the street. The Heritage Sign should be placed in a location away from the house number and mailbox, so that the house address will not be confused with the numbers or names contained on the Heritage Sign.

Once a Heritage Sign is installed, the Heritage Commission reserves the right to photograph the Heritage Sign and its building. To create a historical record of Concord’s buildings, the Heritage Commission reserves the right to use its photos and information submitted for sign summaries, press releases, workshops, or publications concerning the Heritage Sign Program.

### **Heritage Sign Specifications:**

All approved signs will be in the shape and format designed by the Heritage Commission and will contain the words “*Concord Heritage Commission*.” Sample sign photos are included for reference. A sample display of wooden, aluminum, and bronze signs is located at the Planning Dept, Concord City Hall.

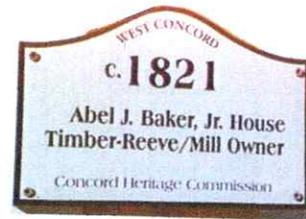
***NOTE: Sign Costs listed may vary due to supply chain production costs at the time of manufacture.***

***Signmaker Installation is available at a separate cost as agreed between the Applicant and the Signmaker.***

Painted Wooden Sign with vinyl letters:

**Small Size:**

8" x 12" Two predrilled holes with hardware  
Up to two lines of information, including characters & spaces  
Background color in white or ivory  
Border and lettering in black or burgundy  
**Cost of sign \$121.50 (does not include installation cost)**



**Large Size:**

10" x 16" Four predrilled holes with hardware  
Up to four lines of information including characters & spaces  
Background color in white or ivory  
Border and lettering in black or burgundy  
**Cost of sign \$141.50 (does not include installation cost)**



Cast Aluminum Sign with brown pebble finish and brushed aluminum letters and border:

**Small Size:**

7.5" x 12" Two predrilled holes with hardware  
Up to two lines of information including characters & spaces  
**Cost of sign \$416.50 (does not include installation cost)**



**Large Size:**

10" x 16" Four predrilled holes with hardware  
Up to four lines of information including characters & spaces  
**Cost of sign \$595.00 (does not include installation cost)**



Cast Bronze Sign with brown pebble finish and brushed bronze letters and border:

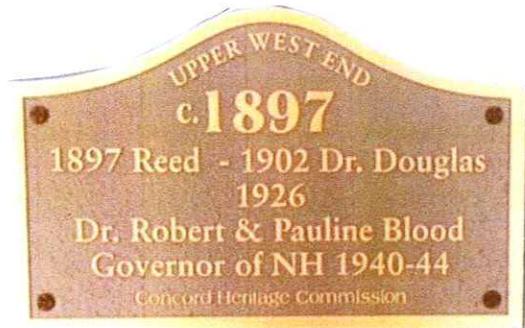
**Small Size:**

7.5" x 12" Two predrilled holes with hardware  
Up to two lines of information including characters & spaces  
Cost of sign \$656.20 (does not include installation cost)



**Large Size:**

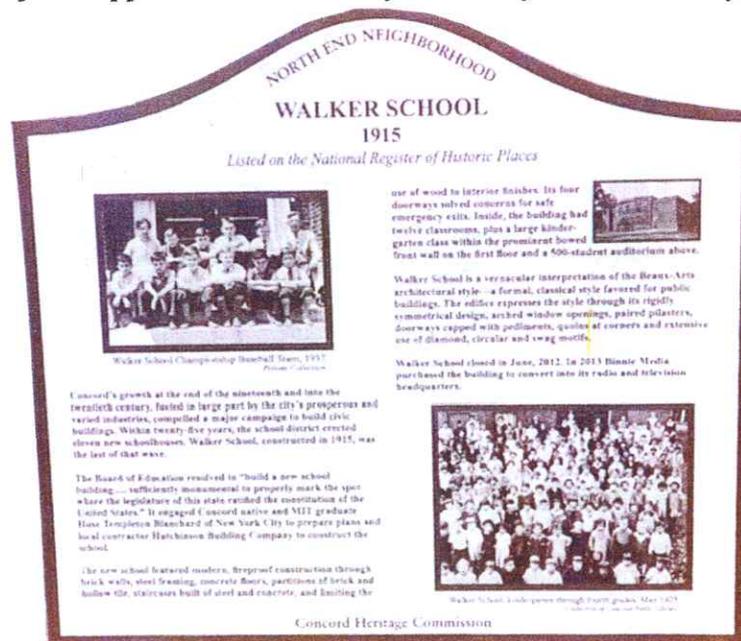
10" x 16" Four predrilled holes with hardware  
Up to four lines of information including characters & spaces  
Cost of sign \$969.00 (does not include installation cost)



**Custom Sign Option:**

The Applicant may propose a custom sign with more descriptive text or photos. Custom signs will have the same Heritage Sign shape in sizes that are larger than the sizes shown above. The sign material may vary from wooden, aluminum or bronze to another medium. The shape, text and process requirements remain the same. Once Sign content is approved by the Heritage Sign Review Committee, the Applicant will obtain the actual production costs and any applicable installation fees directly from the Signmaker.

**Note: It is the responsibility of the Applicant to obtain any necessary additional City approvals for signage.**



**LOCAL AND INTERNET HISTORICAL RESOURCES**  
**Heritage Sign Program Suggestions**  
**For Residential or Commercial Buildings of Any Age**

The Resources Suggestions List should be reviewed prior to researching your building's history to aid in discovering your building's history and completion of your Heritage Sign Application:

*Researching the History of a House in Concord, New Hampshire*, prepared for the Heritage Commission by Preservation Consultant, Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, is part of this document.

*The Heritage Sign Program* can be found on at <https://www.concordnh.gov> on the Planning Division's page. Click on the sidebar 'Heritage Commission' link and open and print the Heritage Sign Application. Also view the list of Approved Heritage Signs and photos of completed signs and Workshop dates and times.

*Concord Public Library*, 45 Green Street, Concord, New Hampshire. Visit the website at <https://www.concordnh.gov/1983/Library>. Click on Concord History and explore various Concord Histories and Historic Photos. Visit the Library's **Concord Room**. The **Concord Heritage Commission's Heritage Sign Program** file contains tips from Heritage Sign Workshops and the *Heritage Sign Program* research tips. The **Concord Room** contains files, plans, maps and directories about the history of the City of Concord.

*NH State Library*, 20 Park Street, Concord, New Hampshire. Resources include extensive Concord Directories and microfilm Sanborn maps. For more information, visit the website at <https://www.nhsl.dncr.nh.gov/>

*NH Historical Society*, 30 Park Street, Concord, New Hampshire. View local histories, genealogies, hardcopy Sanborn maps. Visit the Tuck Library, Historical Society's website at <https://www.nhhistory.org/Research>

*City of Concord Code Administration Division*, 37 Green Street, City Hall Annex, Concord, New Hampshire. Visit the Office to research building permits, or call (603) 225-8580 with a request.

*City of Concord Planning Division*, 41 Green Street, City Hall, Concord, New Hampshire. Visit the office to research site plan review and subdivision applications (email [planning@concordnh.gov](mailto:planning@concordnh.gov) with a request).

*Registry of Deeds research for Concord/Penacook from 1823 to the present: Merrimack County Registry of Deeds*, 163 North Main Street, Concord, New Hampshire. Visit website: <https://www.nhdeeds.com> and click on Merrimack County. A searchable free online index locates names of landowners; fees apply to obtain copies of documents. A visit to the Registry is helpful to get started.

*Registry of Deeds research for Concord/Penacook Prior to 1823 are recorded in the Rockingham County Registry of Deeds*: website: <https://www.nhdeeds.com> and click on Rockingham County. Some of these early records are searchable online. Fees are charged to obtain copies of documents.

*Merrimack County Probate Court Records/prior to 1950's*: Visit NH Records & Archives, Concord, NH.

*National Register of Historic Places* Visit website: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/index.htm> for information regarding property listed on the National Register.

***!Get Started! Troubleshooting!Workshops: Launch your Building and Deed research:*** Held twice a year, 5:30-7:30 pm on the second Tuesday of May and September in the Concord Room, Concord Public Library. Each Workshop is limited to 10 persons maximum. Reserve your space by 12 noon on the day before a Workshop Day; sign up online at the Concord Public Library website.

## RESEARCHING THE HISTORY OF A BUILDING IN CONCORD, NH

Check the *Concord Historic Building Inventory* to see if the property is in more than 1,200 buildings in the city. The inventory is on file, all or in part, at the following locations:

- Concord Public Library's Concord Room, 45 Green Street, Concord, NH (ask the Reference Librarian for assistance)
- NH Historical Society Library, 30 Park Street, Concord, NH
- City of Concord Planning Division, 41 Green Street, Concord, NH
- NH Division of Historical Resources, 172 Pembroke Rd, Concord, NH (This office has the most complete listing).

Check National Register of Historic Places nomination forms, either online at <https://npgallery.nps.gov/nrhp> or at these locations:

- Concord Public Library's Concord Room, 45 Green Street, Concord, NH
- New Hampshire Historical Society Library, 30 Park Street, Concord, NH.
- New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, 172 Pembroke Rd, Concord, NH (call first for an appointment: 603-271-3483). (Again, the NH Division of Historical Resources will have the most complete listing)

*NB: Both the National Register nominations and the building inventory will soon be available on the web, accessed via the City of Concord's website.*

If the building is not listed on the Register and has not been inventoried, try the following:

1. Locate the building on Concord's historic maps, most of which show building footprints and owner names. They are found at the Concord Public Library's Concord Room and the NH Historical Society.

- Published in 1827, shows Main Street area
- Published in 1844, shows downtown and surrounding neighborhoods
- Published in 1846, shows Fisherville, which is now Penacook
- Published in 1851, shows downtown and surrounding neighborhoods
- Published in 1855, shows entire city
- Published in 1858, shows entire city
- Published in 1868, shows downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, as well as Penacook
- Published variously 1869-1965, Sanborn Insurance Company maps. The earliest are limited to downtown and industrial sites, while later ones cover more and more of the neighborhoods.
- Published in 1875, provides a bird's eye view of downtown and surrounding neighborhoods
- Published in 1886, provides a bird's eye view of Penacook
- Published in 1892, shows entire city

2. If the map lists the name of the owner, look up the owner's name in the appropriate City Directory, which has been published nearly annually from 1832 onward. The Directory will list the owner's address and occupation. Once found, you can research backwards in earlier directories to see when the owner is first listed at that address. Directories published after 1930 are indexed not only by surname, but also by street address.

3. Go to the Merrimack County Registry of Deeds and look up the earliest property owner available in the Grantee Index. This will help you to determine when the owner purchased the property, and whether a building

had been standing on the site at that time. Next, take this information and look up the owner in the city directory for that particular year to determine the owner's occupation.

4. If you are ambitious, the following local histories can be checked for additional information regarding the property and its owners:

- Bouton's *History of Concord* (1856), indexed
- Lyford's *History of Concord* (1903), indexed
- Amsden's *A Capitol for Concord* (three-volume manuscript, 1930-60), indexed and an excellent source for pre-1850 owners.

5. Other, more recently published sources include the following:

- *Crosscurrents of Change: Concord, NH in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*
- *Capital Views: A Photographic History of Concord*
- *The Village of West Concord*
- *Concord Eastside: A History of East Concord*
- *A Bend in the River*

Some of these publications may be available for purchase at Gibson's Bookstore.

6. If your building is in Penacook, you may also try the following:

- Hengen's *Village of Penacook: An Architectural and Historical View* (1990)
- Brown's *History of Penacook* (1902)

7. Look up the obituary for the owner by year of death, either in the City Directory, at the New Hampshire Division of Vital Records, Hazen Drive, Concord, New Hampshire, or an online data base, such as Ancestry.com.

8. Check building permit files. Available at City Building/Code Dept. Permits were first granted ca. 1929 and are stored in files in the basement.

9. Check the United States Census Bureau records, including population, agricultural schedules for farms (published in 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880). These can be viewed on microfilm at the New Hampshire State Library. Population censuses are on Ancestry.

10. Check the family genealogies at the New Hampshire Historical Society and the New Hampshire State Library.

11. Check probate records at the Merrimack County Registry of Probate.

12. Check the Notable Index at the NH Historical Society. This will be most useful for researching prominent individuals.

13. Check the photograph files in the Concord Public Library's Concord Room and the New Hampshire Historical Society collection.

14. Check early 20<sup>th</sup> century *Concord Monitor* indices in the Concord Room and at the New Hampshire State Library.

15. Check plan files at the Merrimack County Registry of Deeds. They are usually indexed by the name of the developer, engineer, or owner. These files will most likely yield information if the building was part of a subdivision, is relatively recent or the property was once surveyed.

16. For more recent history, interview long-time neighbors or former owners.

17. And, of course, just try googling names of people associated with the building.

*NB: To best determine the date of a house, the historical record should be complemented by a visual inspection of at least the exterior of the building to be certain it was not replaced at some point, as that often is not reflected in the written record.*

If you run into problems, send a query, ideally with a photograph of the building, to the Heritage Sign Committee; Concord Heritage Commission, c/o Planning Division, City Hall, 41 Green Street, Concord, NH 03301.

*Prepared for the Concord Heritage Commission by Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, Preservation Consultant, 2004, rev. 2011, 2015, 2025*

**HERITAGE SIGN PROGRAM APPLICATION**  
**Concord Heritage Commission**

**OWNER ('APPLICANT') INFORMATION**

Owner/s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State, \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Building Address (if different from owner's address): \_\_\_\_\_

Are you the current owner of the property? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If the Applicant is NOT the current owner of the building, please list the names of all current Owners

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**PROPERTY HISTORY INFORMATION**

To aid your discovery of your building's history, review the enclosed resource guides and visit the Concord Room at the Concord Public Library and other local resources.

**Please provide the following information, if known, and attach copies of all source documents used to support your proposed sign text, including copies of any information concerning your building (i.e., Concord histories, deeds, newspaper articles, building permits, tax assessment cards showing the date of construction), or any other sources found that document the requested sign dates and text.**

Year of Construction: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Original Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Builder (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Architect (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Sources of Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Neighborhood Name (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

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**OFFICIAL PLANNING USE ONLY: Application received by \_\_\_\_\_**  
**ON Date \_\_\_\_\_ AND \$10 Application Fee Paid: Receipt # \_\_\_\_\_**

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HERITAGE SIGN SELECTION FORM

OWNER-APPLICANT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Sign Selection (select one sign size and any applicable items):

*\*Note on listed Sign Costs: Sign Costs listed are approximate and may vary at time of manufacture*

**Painted Wooden Sign with Vinyl Letters:**

\_\_\_\_ Small Size: 8" x 12"; two predrilled holes with hardware; Up to two lines of information, including characters/spaces  
Background Color: \_\_\_\_\_ White \_\_\_\_\_ Ivory  
Border & Lettering: \_\_\_\_\_ Black \_\_\_\_\_ Burgundy  
\*Cost: \$121.50 (does not include installation)

\_\_\_\_ Large Size: 10" x 16"; four predrilled holes with hardware; Up to two lines of information, including characters/spaces  
Background Color: \_\_\_\_\_ White \_\_\_\_\_ Ivory  
Border & Lettering: \_\_\_\_\_ Black \_\_\_\_\_ Burgundy  
\*Cost: \$141.50 (does not include installation)

**Cast Aluminum Sign with brown pebble finish and brushed aluminum letters and border:**

\_\_\_\_ Small Size: 7.5" x 12"; two predrilled holes with hardware; Up to two lines of information, including characters/spaces  
\*Cost: \$416.50 (does not include installation)

\_\_\_\_ Large Size: 10" x 16"; four predrilled holes with hardware; Up to four lines of information, including characters/spaces  
\*Cost: \$595.00 (does not include installation)

**Cast Bronze Sign with brown pebble finish and brushed bronze letters and border:**

\_\_\_\_ Small Size: 7.5" x 12"; two predrilled holes with hardware; Up to two lines of information, including characters/spaces  
\*Cost: \$656.20 (does not include installation)

\_\_\_\_ Large Size: 10" x 16"; four predrilled holes with hardware; Up to four lines of information, including characters/spaces  
\*Cost: \$969.00 (does not include installation)

**Complete One Sign Template (next page): Each square box space on the template is for ONE letter, number, punctuation or space between words. Leave a blank square box for spaces between words. **Please complete in ink:** carefully, neatly, and clearly. An Approved Sign will be made exactly as shown on the Sign Template. *The Heritage Sign Review Committee may designate and insert the neighborhood name on the sign arch.***

\_\_\_\_ **Custom Sign Size Requested: Application Guidelines apply: attach proposed written text & all sources to this Application. NOTE- IN addition. it is the responsibility of the Applicant to obtain any necessary additional City permits and approvals for custom size signage.**

**Approval and Sign Production Process:** I/We understand that upon final approval from the Heritage Commission (the 'Commission'), I/We will be authorized to contact the Commission's designated Signmaker with the Commission's signed approval. I/We will present the Commission's approval to the Signmaker and will make full payment and arrangements for sign production (including any additional installation charges) directly with the Signmaker, Advantage Signs, Inc., 128 Hall Street, Concord, NH 03301. I/We release the City of Concord and the Concord Heritage Commission for all liability.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Owner Applicant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_ Owner Applicant Signature

**APPLICANT'S REQUESTED SIGN TEXT-Select & Use Only One Template**

**Please fill in the blocks detailing the date and text you propose for your Heritage Sign.** Be sure to attach any and all information that supports the dates and text that is proposed for your sign. This information is necessary for the Concord Heritage Sign Review Committee to review your proposed sign.

A sign template with a decorative arched top. At the top center, it says "C." followed by four small rectangular boxes for the year. Below this are two rows of 20 small rectangular boxes each, for the address. At the bottom, it says "Concord Heritage Commission".

Small Sign Format

A sign template with a decorative arched top. At the top center, it says "C." followed by four small rectangular boxes for the year. Below this are four rows of 20 small rectangular boxes each, for the address. At the bottom, it says "Concord Heritage Commission".

Large Sign Format

Owner/s-Applicant/s:

Building/Property Address:

*Heritage Sign Review Committee Approval*

*Approval Date:*

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