

Historic Designations in New Haven

What you need to know about New Haven's Historic Designations:

- what is the New Haven Historic Resources Inventory?
- what is the State Register of Historic Places?
- what is the National Register of Historic Places?
- what is a National Historic Landmark?

About Historic Designations

New Haven's distinguished history, from colonial times to the present, is reflected in the great number of historic buildings that survive. Properties identified as having "historical significance" may be eligible for recognition under state and federal programs that have been created to identify and protect our nation's historic resources. These designations include the New Haven Historic Resources Inventory, the State and National Registers of Historic Places, and National Historic Landmarks. Each designation recognizes a property's cultural significance on a local, state and/or national level, and may qualify it for special historic preservation benefits.

What is a National Historic Landmark?

The highest recognition that an historic property can receive is to be designated a National Historic Landmark. The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to recognize properties of national significance as National Historic Landmarks if they possess qualities that illustrate some aspect of our national heritage. National Park Service historians and archeologists initially evaluate these properties within the context of major themes of American history, nominating those judged to be nationally significant. These nominations are forwarded to the National Park System Advisory Board, which may then recommend to the Secretary of the Interior that the property be designated as a National Historic Landmark. Newly designated National Historic Landmarks are automatically listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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What are the criteria for historic designation?

The National Historic Preservation Act specifies the criteria for evaluating a property's historical significance. Eligible properties include those that are:

- *associated with events that have made a significant contribution to our history*
- *associated with the lives of historically important individuals*
- *a distinctive type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or exemplify a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction*
- *able to provide important information about the nation's history or its prehistory*

In addition, properties must be reasonably well preserved and at least 50 years old to qualify for listing.

Although these criteria have been developed to identify historic resources eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places and for designation as National Historic Landmarks, they are also used to select entries for local historic resources inventories and the State Register of Historic Places.

What is the New Haven Historic Resources Inventory?

The New Haven Historic Resources Inventory is part of a statewide program established to identify local properties of archaeological, architectural, cultural, historical or industrial significance. Standard inventory survey forms are used to describe a building or structure's physical characteristics and evaluate its importance. The information contained on these forms is useful in understanding a property's background, in considering its eligibility for more selective historic designations, and in qualifying it for protection through the city's demolition delay ordinance. New Haven's inventory is divided into separate geographic areas and has grown from the first survey conducted in 1980, which included 641 buildings in the Dwight Street neighborhood, to the current survey of over 6,000 properties in the central, eastern, northern and western sections of the city.

What is the State Register of Historic Places?

The State Register of Historic Places is the official listing of properties important to the historical development of Connecticut. The initial entries for this program were identified in a statewide survey in 1966/67. The State Register is maintained and administered by the State Historic Preservation Office of the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism, and uses most of the same criteria for listing as the National Register of Historic Places. It also includes properties approved for nomination to the National Register, local historic districts, and properties approved for inclusion by the Connecticut Historic Preservation Council. A listing in the State Register promotes historic preservation by:

- *lending support to local historic preservation efforts without restricting the rights of private owners in the use or development of their properties*
- *providing for the review of historic properties in the early stages of state-funded or state-assisted undertakings*
- *qualifying properties for the Connecticut's Historic Homes Rehabilitation Tax Credit program*
- *qualifying properties for grants from Connecticut's Historic Restoration Fund program (if owned by a non-profit organization or municipality)*
- *providing special consideration for historic preservation under the provisions of the state building and fire codes, the state lead poisoning law, and the Americans with Disabilities Act*

What is the National Register of Historic Places?

The National Register of Historic Places is the federal government's comprehensive inventory of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that merit preservation because of their significance to American culture. The listing is administered by the National Park Service under the Secretary of the Interior, and includes nominations from each State Historic Preservation Officer and other government officials. The National Register's primary goal is to encourage historic preservation efforts and to foster a greater appreciation of our heritage. Listing properties in the

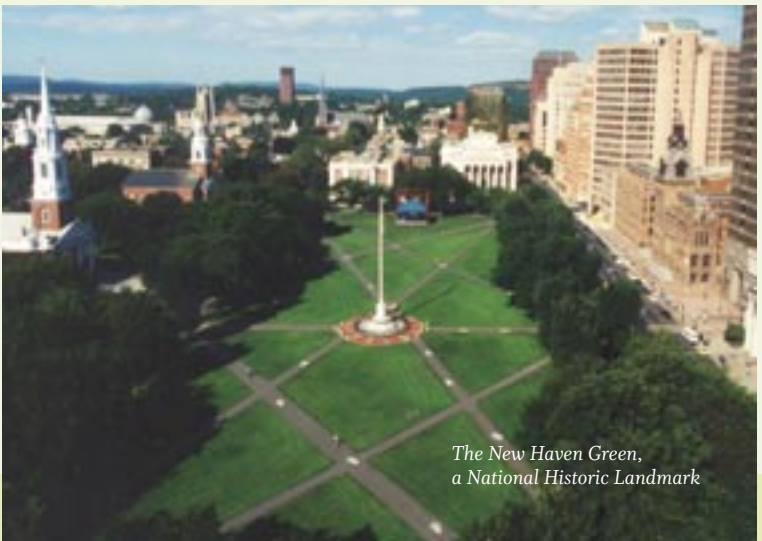
The State of Connecticut contains sixty National Historic Landmarks, eight of which are located in New Haven. One of these is the New Haven Green Historic District, the centerpiece of downtown New Haven. Located on the Green are the United Congregational Church (1812–1815), the First Congregational Church (1812–1815) and Trinity Church (1813–1814).

National Register often changes the way communities perceive their historic properties, and strengthens the credibility of efforts by private citizens and public officials to preserve important resources. Although registration alone does not prevent an owner from demolishing or altering a historic property, the designation promotes historic preservation by:

- *providing federal, state and local agencies and organizations an opportunity to consider the preservation of historic properties in early stages of the planning process*
- *requiring review of federally funded, licensed or directed undertakings that may affect historic properties*
- *encouraging the rehabilitation of income-producing historic properties that meet preservation standards through federal tax incentives*
- *qualifying owners of historic properties to apply for federal grants-in-aid for preservation activities when funding is available*

Under the provisions of the state's Environmental Protection Act (Connecticut General Statutes, Section 22a–19a), additional protection from unreasonable destruction is afforded to properties either listed or being considered for listing on the National Register.

Photograph by Bill O'Brien



*The New Haven Green,
a National Historic Landmark*

For more information:

...about what historic designations a specific New Haven property has, contact:

New Haven City Plan Department
165 Church Street
New Haven, Connecticut 06510
(203) 946-7061
E-MAIL NHInfo@Newhavenct.net
WEB www.cityofnewhaven.com/govt/gov40.htm

The New Haven Preservation Trust
934 State Street
P.O. Box 1671
New Haven, Connecticut 06507
(203) 562-5919
E-MAIL nhpt@sbcglobal.net
WEB www.nhpt.org

...about listing a property on the National or State Registers of Historic Places or about preserving a historic property through the provisions of the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act, contact:

Connecticut Commission
on Culture & Tourism
Historic Preservation and
Museum Division
59 South Prospect Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(860) 566-3005
E-MAIL matt.blood@po.state.ct.us
susan.chandler@po.state.ct.us
WEB www.culturandtourism.org

...about listing a property on the National Register of Historic Places, contact:

National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW
NC-400
Washington, DC 20240
(202) 343-9536
E-MAIL nr_info@nps.gov
WEB www.cr.nps.gov/nr

...about listing a property as a National Historic Landmark, contact:

National Historic Landmarks Survey
National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW
NC-400
Washington, DC 20240
(202) 343-8175
E-MAIL nhl_info@nps.gov
WEB www.cr.nps.gov/nhl