

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

CLASSIFICATIONS OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS FAQS

1. **Why is the HBPC proposing classifications for Historic Buildings, and what are they?**
2. **What does it mean if my property has been proposed for classification as Individually Significant?**
3. **What does it mean if my property has been proposed for classification as Contributing?**
4. **What does it mean if my property has been proposed for classification as an Other Historic Resource?**
5. **What should I do if I think the description for my property includes inaccurate information, or if I don't agree with the proposed classification for my property?**
6. **My property has been identified as contributing to a historic and scenic road or historic neighborhood. What are the historic roads and neighborhoods in Bedford, and why are they significant?**

1. **Why is the HBPC proposing classifications for Historic Buildings, and what are they?**

The HBPC is proposing to create classifications for Historic Buildings in order to reduce the overall number of properties subject to permitting review and to offer a more streamlined process for those properties requiring review, including the possibility of requesting an Expedited Determination based on a project's scope of work and the property's classification. Three classifications are being proposed for properties included on the draft Survey: **Individually Significant, Contributing, and Other Historic Resources**. Proposed alterations to properties classified as Individually Significant or Contributing would be subject to review by the HBPC. Properties classified as Other Historic Resources would not be subject to HBPC review; however, owners of these properties will be encouraged to take advantage of a free, no-obligation consultation with the HBPC to learn more about their property and to review possible options for retaining defining historic features while meeting goals of alternation or expansion.

2. **What does it mean if my property has been proposed for classification as Individually Significant?**

Under the proposed classification system, Individually Significant properties are the most important historic resources in the Town of Bedford. Properties constructed prior to 1900 that are substantially intact have been proposed for classification as Individually Significant, as well as a limited number of outstanding twentieth-century properties that are considered to be distinctive representations of an important period in the history of Bedford or distinctive representations of an architectural style. According to the proposed streamlined review procedures, owners of Individually Significant properties will be able to request an Expedited

Determination for work that does not involve demolition of historic fabric, or for additions that do not impact the structure's historic character.

3. What does it mean if my property has been proposed for classification as Contributing?

Under the proposed classification system, Contributing properties are historic resources that are not significant enough to be designated Individually Significant, but that nevertheless make a distinctive contribution to the overall historic and visual character of the Town of Bedford by virtue of the historic nature of the road or neighborhood where they are located. According to the proposed streamlined review procedures, owners of Contributing properties may request an Expedited Determination for work that does not involve significant demolition of historic fabric and that is not visible from the public way.

4. What does it mean if my property has been proposed for classification as an Other Historic Resource?

Under the proposed classification system, Other Historic Resources are *unregulated* properties of lesser architectural or historic significance, or where historic features and fabric have been compromised, but which nonetheless contribute to the historic character of the Town. Under this system, owners of these properties would be entitled to voluntary, no-charge consultations with the HBPC, but *not required* to obtain HPBC approval for any alteration, addition or demolition.

5. What should I do if I think the description for my property includes inaccurate information, or if I don't agree with the proposed classification for my property?

Descriptions of significance and dates in the draft Survey are based on visual assessments of architectural characteristics combined with information from the Town's Assessor's and Historian's files, as well as information from property owners and other sources. In order to ensure the accuracy of the Survey, the HBPC welcomes further information about the history of any properties included on it. Owners wishing to provide additional information about the history of their property, or to request a review of their property's classification or inclusion on the Survey, are invited to submit a [Historic Resource Review Request](#) which will be available on the HBPC webpage on the Town website and at the HBPC Office. Please note that the HBPC may require a site visit to review a request for change of classification.

6. My property has been identified as contributing to a historic and scenic road or historic neighborhood. What are the historic roads and neighborhoods in Bedford, and why are they significant?

The intact nature of many of Bedford's historic roads and neighborhoods is one of its defining characteristics. Residents and visitors alike appreciate a natural and architectural environment in many areas of the Town that has remained substantially intact over one, two, or more centuries. The combination of unpaved roads, open views, stone walls, historic houses and smaller structures create an

environment of historic and natural beauty that is truly unique, but also quite varied from one area of the Town to another. In compiling the draft Survey, a number of buildings were recognized as contributing to the historic character of these distinctive roads and neighborhoods. A list of historic roads and neighborhoods referenced in the Survey that are documented on historic maps and have substantially retained their historic character and features may be found on the HBPC [webpage](#).