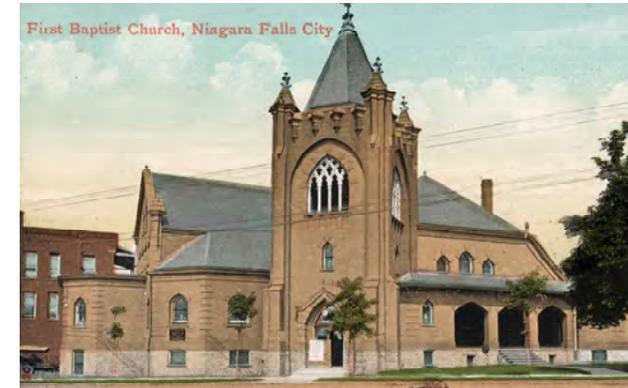


Park Place Historic District

A Guide for District Residents



City of Niagara Falls

745 Main Street
Niagara Falls, NY 14301
<http://www.niagarafallsusa.org>

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Certificate of Appropriateness: Review Standards

For any exterior work on a District structure that requires a building permit, the property owner must first obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness from the City's Historic Preservation Commission.

Also, any shed, garage, gazebo or similar type of structure will require a Certificate of Appropriateness if it is in the front or side yards. Work on such structures in rear yards will require a Certificate of Appropriateness if it is larger than 120 square feet.

Certificates of Appropriateness will be issued for all exterior work that is consistent with one of the four identified representative types of residential development (below). All exterior work, which does not match one of these layers, will be reviewed in context of other examples developed within the District and/or elsewhere in the City.

Examples of appropriate styles are illustrated as follows:

1850s



Late 19th Century



Early 20th Century



1920s



Certificate of Appropriateness: Application

Applications for Certificates of Appropriateness are located in the City of Niagara Falls Planning Office, which processes the applications and refers them to the Historic Preservation Commission. A \$15.00 dollar application fee will apply.

The Commission must approve or deny the application for Certificate of Appropriateness within 45 days of receiving the approved application. If the Commission does not act on the application within 45 days it will be deemed approved.

A property owner that can prove that he or she is facing economic hardship may appeal a denied the Certificate of Appropriateness by filing an application within 60 days.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Rehabilitation

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation have been adopted for the District. The Standards include ten principles intended to help preserve the distinctive character of the building and the site it is located on. The ten principles will be applied by the Commission in a reasonable manner, and the economic and technical feasibility of rehabilitation will be taken into account.

For further information on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Rehabilitation: visit:

http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standards_guidelines.htm



What is a Historic District?

In Niagara Falls, a historic district is a neighborhood (or a larger area) that has been designated as historic by the City Council. The basis for such historic designation can vary, but common categories of significance include the architectural styles of the structures within the district, significant persons who lived, or events that occurred, within the district and/or a concentration of structures that represent periods of the City's development. The historic districts within the City of Niagara Falls are regulated by the City Ordinance, Chapter 1335 (Historic Preservation Regulations).

Park Place Historic District

On July 9, 2007, the City Council approved the historic designation of the Park Place Historic District (see map for boundaries). The Park Place Historic District received historic designation due to the concentration of 19th and early 20th century structures within its boundaries. Specifically, the structures within the District represent the following four distinct time periods of residential development in Niagara Falls:

1. *1850s worker cottages (Cedar Avenue)*
2. *Late 19th Century middle-income residences, including single family, multiple family, flats, boarding houses and tourist houses (Cedar Avenue and the 600 block of 4th Street)*
3. *Early 20th Century upper-income residences built for the early leaders of local industry and commerce (Park Place)*
4. *1920s homes built for mid-level professionals (700 block of 4th Street)*



The Development of Park Place Historic District

The first known written record of the area that includes Park Place Historic District is Tobias Witmer's 1854 map, which shows both Cedar Avenue and Main Street (formerly known as Ontario). Later that century, Sanborn Insurance Maps depict extensive residential development within the district, particularly along Cedar Avenue and the 600 block of 4th Street). Earlier buildings in the District consisted of a mix of both worker houses and larger middle-income homes.



It is commonly believed that the District's oldest standing building is the detached barn at the rear of 762 Fourth Street, which dates to the 1850s.

Unfortunately, some District structures were demolished over time, most notably the former Schoellkopf estate (pictured at left) located at 502 Pine Avenue (now a gas station).

Benefits of a Historic District

The designation of a Niagara Falls historic district recognizes its historical significance to the City and provides the City with a mechanism to protect the structures within the district from changes that could compromise its integrity. In addition to fostering civic pride and promoting its neighborhoods, a historic district can enhance the property values of the structures within the district and make available certain incentives for owning a building within the district. One such incentive is New York's Rehabilitation Tax Credit for Homeowners. Certain homeowners that live within income-qualified neighborhoods may be eligible for a New York income tax credit if their home is listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places (or is located within a listed-district and is determined to contribute to that district) and they complete a certain amount of approved rehabilitation. As of 2009, the neighborhood containing the Park Place Historic District qualifies for this credit. For more information of New York's tax credit program, please visit:

www.nysparks.state.ny.us/shpo/

