The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings

Eric Dray
Preservation Consultant
What are they?

Four treatment approaches:

1. Preservation
   *Sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property.*

2. Rehabilitation
   *Acknowledges the need to alter or add to an historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining the property's historic character.*

3. Restoration
   *Depict a property at a particular period of time in history, while removing evidence of other periods.*

4. Reconstruction
   *Re-create vanished or non-surviving portions of a property for interpretive purposes.*
Where did they come from?

- 1978 NPS “Secretary’s Standards” and “Guidelines for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings”
- 1992 revised to what we use today

The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings

- Have become standard for review at federal, state and local level
Why do we need to know them in Falmouth?

- Incorporated into the Community Preservation Act

  "With respect to historic resources, rehabilitation shall have the additional meaning of work to comply with the Standards for Rehabilitation stated in the United States Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties codified in 36 C.F.R. Part 68."

- Section 5 refers to preservation, rehabilitation and restoration (reconstruction not included).

- Principles embedded in historic district design review

- Focus is on Rehabilitation Standard
Standard 1
“New wine in an old bottle”

A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
**Standard 2**

“Keep important features and spaces”

The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

*Existing first floor plan prior to rehabilitation. Note outline of shelving units added to the right of the parlor fireplace during the 1960s rehabilitation.*

*First floor plan, after rehabilitation. Alterations to intact spaces at the front of the first floor (hall, parlor, dining room) destroyed the spatial symmetry characteristic of the formal 18th-century interior design.*
Standard 3

“No fake history”

Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
Standard 4

“Keep significant layers”

Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
Standard 5

“Keep important materials, techniques”

Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
Standard 6

“If can’t preserve, replace-in-kind”

Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
Standard 7
“Clean carefully”

Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
**Standard 8**

“Rest in peace”

Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
Standard 9

“The same but different”

New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in a such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.
The Other Standards

Preservation
- No new materials
- Very limited replacement-in-kind
- Not include additions
- Keep use or find compatible one

Restoration
- Allow removal if not of period
- Must remove all non-period features (in for a penny...)
- Same standard as Rehabilitation for deteriorated features
- No standard for additions, new construction
- For missing elements
  - Must have been built, and
  - Must have documentation

Reconstruction
- Closer to Preservation standard in terms of materials, i.e. strict, but ...
- Must clearly identify as a contemporary re-creation
- Must be necessary for interpretive purposes (no others with same associative value)
Questions