

# **GREAT BARRINGTON *HISTORIC MARKER PROGRAM* FOR HISTORIC STRUCTURES**

## **Introduction and Purpose of Program**

Great Barrington's Historical Society, Historical Commission and Historic District Commission are offering an opportunity for all town residents who own historic homes, barns, commercial and industrial buildings, houses of worship or other structures to obtain plaques to display historic information about their properties. Although there are certain requirements for participation in the historic marker program, the display of a plaque on a structure involves no legal implications. *Please note that the historic marker is assigned to a structure, not awarded to a person or family, and the marker stays with the structure even if the occupants change.*

The goal of the Marker Program is to not only help identify but to educate the public about individual structures that make up our community's rich architectural fabric. We hope eligible property owners will participate and display their markers with great pride.

## ***Program Information and How to Obtain an Historic Marker***

### **Who Operates the Program?**

A Historic Marker Oversight Panel (the "Panel"), comprised of a representative each from the Historic District Commission, Historical Commission and Historical Society, administers the program and judges applications. Note: this body isn't an officially appointed town committee.

### **Description and Cost of Historic Markers**

The markers are available in a choice of two mediums

1. Bronze Plaques are approximately \$285 each plus shipping and applicable Sales Tax
2. Polycarbonate Plaques are approximately \$70 each plus applicable Sales Tax

\*Note: The Review Panel coordinates and administers the purchases. Installation costs are not included.

Costs are subject to change.

The markers are oval and measure 10" x 7." The font style is Times New Roman. The bronze versions have relief lettering while the PVC style features black lettering on a white field. Each marker includes the cenotaph from the Historical Society's logo and the inscription, *Historic Great Barrington*. The markers can be front-mounted with screws or back-mounted with a bracket.

Please refer to the attached sample design.

## Marker Installation

For uniformity, the Panel recommends that, whenever possible, owners affix their marker plaques: (1) at the right corner of the street-facing side of the structure and (2) at the top of the first story of the structure. For structures within the downtown Historic District, the marker location may be determined by the Panel.

## What Structures Are Eligible for the Historic Marker Program?

To be eligible to participate, owners must justify the significance of their structure and provide supportive documentation as necessary. The Panel will evaluate a structure's qualification for a marker according to the following criteria:

- Age:** The structure must be at least 50 years old.
- Event:** The site or building is associated with one or more events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Great Barrington (and/or state, regional or national) history.
- Person:** The site or building is associated with a person or group who made a noteworthy contribution to local, regional or national history, even if the names of those persons are no longer known.
- Architecture:** The building embodies distinctive characteristics of a particular architectural or construction style, including both the work of noted architects as well as unknown regional builders and craftsmen.
- Archaeology:** The site demonstrates or, based on its history and/or geography, is likely to offer important information pertaining to local prehistory or history.

## How do I apply?

### **STEP 1 Complete Application Form:**

- Either download the form ([www.townofgb.org](http://www.townofgb.org)), "Historic Marker Program Description and Application," or obtain a hard copy from the Town Clerk's office.
- Complete all sections of the application.
- The application must also include:
  - (1) A photograph of the front of the building (print or digital).
  - (2) A photocopy of the Inventory and/or National Register Nomination Forms, when available, if the structure is included on the local historic sites inventory (a copy is in the historical room at the Mason Library) or listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

- The owner enters the desired text of the marker in Section V of the application.
- Include any other supportive material such as copies of period photographs, reminiscences, blueprints, biographical information of past owners, etc. Please consult with the panel if you have any question about what to attach.

#### **STEP 2 Submit Completed Form:**

- Submit the completed application and any supporting material to the Panel for review and approval, either by: e-mail (pwivory@gmail.com), U. S. mail (c/o Town Clerk, Town Hall, 334 Main St., Great Barrington, MA 01230) or by hand delivery to the Town Clerk's office in Town Hall (ground floor).

#### **STEP 3 Panel Makes Decision:**

- The Panel evaluates the owner's application and responds as soon as possible, typically within 30-60 days.
- If approved, the Panel signs the application form and returns it to the owner along with a completed order form (the "Approved Form") to officially order the marker.

#### **STEP 4 Owner Orders Marker:**

- The applicant mails a copy of the signed application and Approval Form, along with payment, to the sign maker. Instructions for contacting the sign maker are included on the Approval Form.

### **How Can an Interested Owner Find Information About a Structure?**

The explanation and documentation portions of the application (Sections II, III, IV) are ~~is~~ very important. To maintain the integrity of the program, the Panel needs to verify the significance of the structure to ensure that only qualifying buildings are approved to have historic markers.

Reference binders of Massachusetts Historical Commission Inventory Forms for structures, included in the c. 1982 architectural survey of Great Barrington, are available at the Mason Library. The Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) is available online at <http://mhc-macris.net/>. Both of these resources should be consulted first. Other references on local history, architectural styles, etc. and information on many properties may be found at the town libraries.

### **What is the Procedure for Review?**

The Panel will confirm receipt of all applications by mail or email. Typically, the review will take about 30-60 days to complete. It will focus on verification of the significance of the property and the accuracy and appropriateness of the proposed text of the marker.

The Panel may deny an application if it determines the structure does not qualify, or if an application does not contain enough detail or explanation to confirm the importance of the structure. An application may also be denied if the Panel deems the requested text to be

inaccurate or inappropriate. In such cases, the Panel will ask the applicant for additional information or alternative text for the proposed marker

The Panel will approve requests for expedited review of properties if the application adequately documents the structure's historical significance and the requested text of the marker is accurate and appropriate.

As mentioned above, once the Panel approves an application it will sign and return the form to the owner along with a completed Approval Form and Marker Order Form so that the owner can order the marker directly from the sign maker.

**Ordering and Paying for the Marker**

An Approval Form, signed by the Panel, authorizes the owner to order a plaque. The owner sends an order form, payment (a check made out to the sign maker) and the signed Approval Form directly to the sign maker.

**Additional Information:**

Please contact the Panel directly with any questions about the historic marker program.

**Historic Marker Program Panel  
c/o Town Clerk  
Town Hall  
334 Main St.  
Great Barrington, MA 01230**



Sample Polycarbonate Plaque



Sample Bronze Plaque

# Great Barrington Historic District Commission Historic Marker Application

*Fill out as much information as you know. Please type or print clearly.*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section I

### Current Owner/Site Location/Marker Applicant Information

1. Applicant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location/Address of Applicant Site: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Applicant's Telephone (list at least two numbers if possible):

Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Applicant's Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Applicant's E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Applicant's Mailing Address:

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Section II

### Original and Other Significant Owners of the Structure

*Research Information: Please include as much of this information as possible. Identify the source of information even if it is from anecdote or legend. Attach additional sheets as needed.*

#### 1. Original Owner(s);

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name of Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Places of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Marriage Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Deaths: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupations: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Ownership: \_\_\_\_\_

Source(s) of Information: \_\_\_\_\_

## **2. Other Significant Owner(s):**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name of Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupations: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Ownership: \_\_\_\_\_

Source(s) of Information: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Section III**

### **Construction Dates and Builders**

1. Date of Construction: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Architect: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Builder: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Source(s) of Information: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Section IV**

### **Modifications and Relevant Information**

1. Dates and Brief Descriptions of Major Architectural Changes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Source(s) of Information: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Pertinent Information about the Property, its Owners, Residents or History: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Source(s) of Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Historic Designations of the Structure: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section V

### Plaque Size and Recommended Text

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Please note that the historic marker is assigned to a structure, not awarded to a person or family, and the marker remains with the structure even if the occupants change.

Please remit application to Great Barrington Historic Marker Program  
Town Hall, 334 Main Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230