

Excerpted from Town of Great Barrington Zoning By Law §9.5 Downtown Business District:

**9.5.6 Design Advisory Committee.** A Design Advisory Committee is hereby established to review applications for all actions that are subject to the provisions of this section and to work cooperatively with owners of land, buildings and businesses. The Design Advisory Committee shall make recommendations to the appropriate decision making body and/or the applicant concerning compliance of the proposed action to the design review standards in this section. The Design Advisory Committee shall consist of seven members, constituted as follows:

1. Building Inspector (ex officio, nonvoting member).
2. Planning Board member, selected by the Planning Board.
3. Historic District Commission member, selected by the Historic District Commission.
4. Architect, appointed by the Board of Selectmen.
5. Design Professional, appointed by the Board of Selectmen.[amended 5/6/2013 ATM]
6. Three members from the general public, appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

The terms of all appointed members shall be five years. The Historic District Commission member and the Planning Board member shall serve for one-year terms. The selecting or appointing boards or commissions may select or appoint an Alternate Member who may serve and act in the place of the Member selected or appointed by that board or commission in the event of the absence of that Member. In the event of an absence, the Chair may elevate an Alternate Member(s) in order to form a quorum and to vote on matters pending before the Committee, provided that the composition of the Committee is not altered.

**9.5.7 Design Advisory Committee; Procedures.**

1. Applications for all actions subject to review by the Design Advisory Committee shall be made by completing an application form and submitting it to the Building Inspector. Application forms are available from the Building Inspector's office. Further information about the application process is set forth in the Rules and Regulations of the Design Advisory Committee.

2. Submittal Requirements. Applicants to the Design Advisory Committee shall address all standards listed in 9.5.8 below. If the project involves a variance, special permit or building permit, any information required for it should be included. The Committee may request additional information if it deems to be relevant. Each application shall be accompanied by photographs of the existing buildings and/or site, showing the area to be modified. The following scaled drawings shall accompany the application, unless this requirement is waived by the Design Advisory Committee:

- a. Small scale (minimum 1/8 inch equals one foot zero inches) elevation showing the existing building with proposed changes and adjacent buildings.
- b. Large scale (minimum 1/2 inch equals one foot zero inches) elevation showing proposed changes.
- c. Section details (minimum 1/2 inch equals one foot zero inches).
- d. Building plans as submitted to the Building Inspector.

3. Process. The Building Inspector shall transmit copies of the application to the Design Advisory Committee. The Committee shall review the application, meet with the applicant and provide its recommendations, in writing, to the applicant and the Building Inspector within 30 days. If the application for design review is associated with an application for a variance or a special permit, the

Building Inspector shall immediately transmit the Design Advisory Board's recommendation to the Planning Board or the Zoning Board of Appeals, whichever is relevant.

**9.5.8 Design Review Standards.** The standards which are described below are intended to provide a guide to the applicant and the Design Advisory Committee for the design review of proposed actions. These standards shall not be regarded as inflexible requirements, and they are not intended to discourage creativity, invention or innovation; rather, they are intended to focus attention on design principles which enhance the visual appearance of the community.

1. General principles.

- a. Every reasonable effort shall be made to preserve the distinguishing original qualities of a building, structure or site and its environment. The removal or alteration of any historic material or architectural features should be avoided whenever possible.
- b. Distinctive features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a building, structure or site shall be treated with sensitivity.
- c. All new development shall be treated harmoniously to the use, scale and architecture of existing buildings in the vicinity that have a functional or visual relationship to the proposed building.
- d. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical architectural or cultural material and when such design is compatible with the surrounding environment.

2. Design review standards. The Design Advisory Committee shall consider, at a minimum, the following standards in the course of a design review of a proposed action:

- a. Height. The height of any proposed alteration should be compatible with the style and character of the surrounding buildings.
- b. Proportions of windows and doors. The proportions and relationships between doors and windows should be compatible with the architectural style and character of the surrounding area.
- c. Relationships of building masses and spaces. The relationship of a structure to the open space between it and adjoining structures should be compatible.
- d. Roof. The design and shape of the roof should be compatible with the architectural style of the surrounding buildings.
- e. Landscape. The landscape should be compatible with the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Native species for landscaping are encouraged. Invasive species are prohibited.
- f. Scale. The scale of the structure should be compatible with its architectural style and the character of the surrounding buildings.
- g. Architectural details. Architectural details, including signs, materials, colors and textures, shall be compatible with a building's original architectural style in a manner that preserves and enhances the character of the surrounding area.