



Westwood's history is important to everyone.

The Westwood Historic Commission is committed to safeguarding the character of Westwood through the future preservation of its historic buildings, districts, landscapes and structures.

Won't you help us to safeguard our heritage for future generations?

To learn more about the Westwood Historic Commission and the designation process, come to the WHC's regularly scheduled meetings on the second Wednesday of each month at the Westwood Municipal Complex, 101 Washington Avenue, Westwood, NJ 07675.



To find out if your property is designated, contact the Westwood Historic Commission at historiccommission@westwoodnj.gov.



Do You Own an Historic Westwood Property?



Over the last several decades, many historically and architecturally significant buildings within the Borough of Westwood have been destroyed or altered beyond recognition. To save Westwood's historic legacy, the Borough created the Westwood Historic Commission (WHC) to identify and formally designate historic buildings, districts, landscapes and structures that merit preservation, as well as to promote Historic Preservation in the Borough through guidance and educational initiatives.

- Could your building be a landmark?
- Could you be located in an historic district?
- What does it mean to be designated?



What does it mean to be designated? It means that your home or building has been formally recognized by the WHC as being of historic or architectural significance. Typically, your building or property must be at least 50 years old, have some significance associated with it and have retained some degree of integrity. For example, do you live in the home of a Westwood founder? Is your building typical of a particular architectural style? If so, it could be designated.

How is a property designated? To date the WHC has reviewed the history of Westwood and created a list of buildings, properties and streetscapes potentially eligible for designation. Notice of proposed designations will be sent to building owners informing them of the nomination beforehand. The Borough will hold several public hearings before your property is designated.

How will designation affect my property? An owner of a designated property who wants to alter the exterior of his/her building will need to have their plans reviewed by the WHC to make sure that the alteration does not change the historic character of the building. The WHC will gladly work with building owners to ensure that proposals for design and materials are historically appropriate.

Will designation prevent me from changing my building? No, designation does not mean that a building is “frozen in time.” The WHC understands that in order for older buildings to remain vital, they must be updated to accommodate modern needs. However, owners of designated buildings are encouraged to make these changes with an eye toward preserving their buildings’ character-defining features. Only exterior changes will be reviewed by the WHC; interior changes are not subject to review.

I want to be a good steward of my historic building. Are there any resources that can help me? The WHC is here to offer guidance and has put together a collection of resource materials that are available in the Westwood Public Library. Information is also available online in the Secretary of the Interior’s *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* at: www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standguide/preserve/preserve_standards.htm.

What types of work on a designated building do not require WHC review? Interior work and ordinary exterior repairs and maintenance, such as repainting or fixing a broken window, do not require WHC review. The WHC also has no authority over exterior paint colors but is happy to offer suggestions.



What are the benefits and drawbacks of having a designated property? The WHC will offer advice and suggestions on ways to improve the exterior of your building without diminishing its historic significance. While the process may seem onerous to some building owners, studies have shown that property values rise faster in historic districts than in non-designated districts owing to the “curb appeal” of well-preserved neighborhoods.

Will I incur any additional application fees as a property owner of a designated building? No, in fact designated building owners receive a fee waiver when filing their construction applications with the Borough’s Building Department which can translate into substantial savings. The Building Department joins the WHC in encouraging owners of designated buildings to do the right thing when it comes to protecting the Borough’s historic legacy.

To view Westwood’s Historic Preservation Ordinance, go to www.westwoodnj.gov, move your cursor over Boards and Commissions and Historic Preservation Committee, and click on Historic Preservation.