



National Preservation Institute

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The Secretary of the Interior's Standards: An Overview

Seminar Overview

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties form the basis for work on historic properties, including all federal undertakings, federal tax benefits, and, often, state, local, and private projects. Explore the Standards in detail, with particular attention to identifying significance and determining appropriate preservation strategies for historic fabric. Explore the topics of accessibility, building codes, fire protection, resiliency, security, and sustainability that may impact decisionmaking. Through hands-on exercises, participants learn how to apply the Standards to their projects.

Agenda

Preservation in the United States

Or

The origins of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act, Public Law 89-665?

- Meet the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association
- Teddy Roosevelt, the Antiquities Act, the National Park Service, and National Monuments
- The Great Depression and the Historic American Buildings Survey work program
- Charleston, New Orleans, and Georgetown all recognized as historic districts
- Dwight Eisenhower and the Interstate Highway System, John Kennedy and urban renewal
- The 1966 National Historic Preservation Act, Public Law 89-665, and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards (for the Treatment of Historic Properties & Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings) establishing "professional standards for the preservation of historic properties."

Assessing applicability of the Standards to a resource: Does it qualify?

Or

Assessing significance of a resource

The four questions:

- Is the property associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history?
- Is the property associated with the lives of persons significant in our past?
- Does the property embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction?
- Does the property show, or may be likely to yield, information important to history or prehistory?

Continued . . .

Assessing the integrity of a resource

- Evaluating the value of the building, structure, site, or landscape
- Identifying contributing elements
- Understanding resource's architectural and visual character
- Identifying original fabric, modifications, and evaluating condition
- Understanding how the building or structure works: exterior, interior, mechanical systems, site, district/neighborhood

Understanding "treatment" types under the Secretary of the Interior's Standards

- Preservation
- Rehabilitation
- Rehabilitation (for historic tax credit projects)
- Restoration
- Reconstruction

Guidelines for application of the Standards

- Identifying, retaining, and preserving historic materials and features
- Protecting and maintaining historic materials and features
- Repairing historic materials and features
- Replacing deteriorated historic materials and features
- Design for the replacement of missing historic features
- Alternations/additions for the new use
- Reconstruction as a treatment
- Investigating archaeological resources

Spending time in the weeds (or swamp):

Practicalities intersect with principles

- Accessibility: More nuanced than the wheelchair icon
- Building codes: Lead in paint (LBP), handrail heights, fire department connections (FDC), floor loads
- Fire protection: Egress! No insurance without sprinklers!
- Resilience: FEMA says you're in the floodplain...
- Security: They closed the front door so the scanners can be at just one entrance
- Sustainability: To LEED or not?

Laws and regulations, including nominations and documentation

- 1966 National Historic Preservation Act, Public Law 89-665
- Section 106 review (36 CFR Part 800)
- Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program
- National Historic Landmarks
- National Register of Historic Places

Meeting the Standards: Case studies

- Discuss the application of the Standards to participant projects