

Historic Preservation Resources in Davidson

The board of commissioners included in their 2018 strategic plan a goal to “preserve our historically significant structures to retain our authenticity as a historic, small college town.”

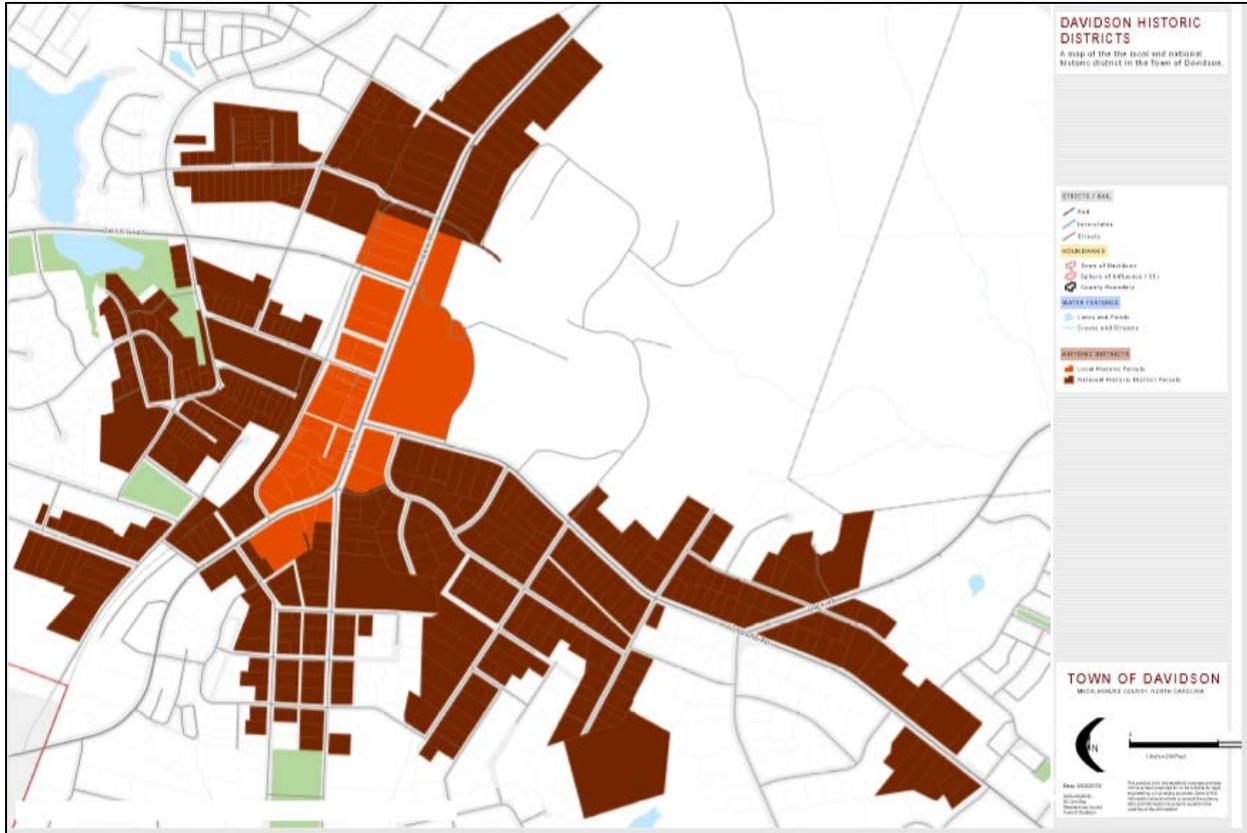
What is a National Register Historic District (NRHD)? Does Davidson have one? Where is it? Are there benefits to the property owner of being included in the NRHD?

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation’s official list of buildings, structures, sites and districts worthy of preservation for their significance. The National Register is a federal program; however, nominations to designate a historic district are submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for approval.

In 2008, the Town of Davidson submitted an architectural survey, narrative, and visual documentation of structures located throughout older Davidson neighborhoods to the SHPO to request designation in the National Register of Historic Places. The designation was realized in 2009. Properties shown in brown on the map below are included in the NRHD.

Every structure within the historic district is listed as either “contributing” or “non-contributing” to the historic district. Typically, structures must be 50 years old, have integrity of historic character, and significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, or culture, to qualify as “contributing structures.”

The map below shows the NRHD in brown.



Several structures in Davidson are both part of the NRHD and individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

Chairman Blake House: 318 Chairman Blake Lane.

Eumenean Hall and Philanthropic Hall: Davidson College campus

Beaver Dam: Davidson-Concord Road

Under Federal Law, the listing of a property in the National Register places no restrictions on what an owner may do with their property, up to and including demolition.

A 15% state tax credit is available for qualified substantial rehabilitation of owner-occupied residential properties that are listed as contributing structures in the NRHD. A fact sheet is available at: http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/TaxCredits/NTA_FactSheet.pdf.

A 20% federal income tax credit and a 15% - 25% state tax credit is available for the certified rehabilitation of historic, income-producing buildings that are determined by the Secretary of the Interior, through the National Park Service, to be "certified historic structures." The State Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service review the rehabilitation work to ensure that it complies with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. A fact sheet is available at: http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/TaxCredits/ITA_FactSheet.pdf.

Does Davidson have a local historic district? How is it different from the NRHD? Are there benefits to the property owner?

The authority for jurisdictions to establish local historic districts (LHD) is granted by GS 160A-400.1-400.15. LHDs are typically designated as overlay zoning districts; that is, an extra layer of regulations that are applicable only to the LHD, not to the entire zoning district (or in our nomenclature, planning area).

On October 10, 1989, the Davidson Board of Commissioners approved an “Historic Preservation Ordinance” that established a local historic district, created the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), gave it jurisdiction over the district, and enumerated the procedures to request and criteria with which to review applications for projects within the district. (Updated rules of procedure for the HPC were adopted by the Davidson Board of Commissioners on October 12, 2010.)

At their December 12, 1989 meeting, the board of commissioners approved the map of the current local historic district, essentially rezoning the area as an overlay district. The LHD (shown in orange on the map above) is generally the downtown area and has special significance in terms of its history and architecture. It is an overlay on portions of the current Village Center, Village commerce, and Village Edge planning areas. On the map above, the properties shown in orange constitute the LHD.

Owners of property in a local historic district are required to obtain Certificates of Appropriateness from the HPC before making significant changes or additions to a property, before beginning new construction, or before demolishing or relocating a property. Davidson’s HPC is synonymous with its Design Review Board (DRB). When legislating decisions regarding structures within the LHD, they act as the HPC; when legislating decisions regarding structures in the remainder of the community, they act as the DRB. An Historic Preservation Commission’s authority includes the ability to delay demolition of a structure in the LHD for up to 365 days. The HPC's review of proposed changes ensures that work on a property in a local district is appropriate to the special character of the district. The HPC adopted, and the board of commissioners approved, design guidelines as the criteria to judge what changes are appropriate. Property owners also use the design guidelines to plan possible projects, and to discuss their applications with the HPC.

Section 22 of the Davidson Planning Ordinance includes specific Local Historic District Guidelines that are the criteria the HPC uses for approving work in the LHD. These were written in 2009 and included in the ordinance in 2015:

http://www.ci.davidson.nc.us/DocumentCenter/View/8094/Section-22-update-HDguidelines-DRBedit-fonts_20150409?bidId=)

Historic district zoning can help to stabilize property values by maintaining the neighborhood's character and, depending on the design guidelines used by the HPC to review projects, it can benefit property owners by protecting them from inappropriate changes made by other owners that might destroy the special qualities of the neighborhood.

What is a historic landmark? Are there landmarks in Davidson? How does a structure become a designated landmark? Are there benefits to the property owner?

The authority for a jurisdiction to designate structures as historic landmarks is also enabled under GS 160A-400. In February, 2005 the Town of Davidson entered into a formal interlocal agreement with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission to recommend structures worthy of designation as local historic landmarks. Both the Landmarks Commission and the Davidson Board of Commissioners must approve the landmark designation, with additional input from the state. The owner does not need to approve the designation. The following is a list of Davidson historic landmarks and the date they were designated:

Armour-Adams House	626 N. Main Street	2/13/2007
Beaver Dam	19600 Davidson-Concord Road	2/9/2016
Blake House, Chairman	318 Chairman Blake Lane	5/19/1980
Bradford Farm	15908 Davidson-Concord Road	11/12/2002
Bradford Store	15915 Davidson-Concord Road	6/19/2006
Cashion/Moore Cemetery	McAuley Road & Hwy 73	2/13/2007
Currie House, Violet W.	525 N. Main Street	11/19/2013
Daggy House, Tom & Mary Lu	102 Hillside Drive	5/14/2013
Davidson Colored School/Ada Jenkins	212 Gamble Street	11/13/2007
Davidson Cotton Mill	209 Delburg Street	11/9/2004
Davidson School	251 South Street	3/13/2012
Delburg Cotton Mill House	303 Delburg Street	1/13/2015
Elm Row	306 N. Main Street	7/18/1977
Eumenean Hall	214 N. Main Street	1/25/1977
Falls Store	300 Mock Road	9/14/2010
Helper Hotel (Carolina Inn)	225 and 215 N. Main Street	7/18/1977
Holt-Henderson-Copeland House	305 N. Main Street	2/13/2007
Mabonsie	312 S. Thompson Street	11/19/2013
Oak Row & Elm Row	306 and 308 Main Street	7/18/1977
Philanthropic Hall	216 N. Main Street	9/22/1975
Purcell House, James & Elizabeth	206 Lorimer Road	9/14/2010
Restormel	829 Concord Road	2/13/2007
Southern Power Co Transformer Bldg	210 Delburg Street	11/9/2004
Unity Church Cabin/Lingle Hut	213 and 219 Watson Street	12/9/2008

The landmarks designation can apply to the exterior only or to both the interior and exterior of a structure. The owner of a designated historic landmark may apply for an automatic deferral of 50% (30% if exterior only) of the Ad Valorem taxes on the structure. This deferral exists as long as the property retains its status as a historic landmark.

The owner of a historic landmark must apply to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission for a Certificate of Appropriateness before any material alteration, restoration, removal, or demolition of any exterior feature of the structure may take place.

A Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of a landmark may not be denied except as noted below; however, the Landmarks Commission may delay the date of the demolition for a period of up to 365 days. The only instance in which the demolition of a historic landmark may be denied is if the designated landmark is determined by the State Historic Preservation Officer as having state-wide significance as defined by the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places.