

Chapter 6

Demolition & Moving

A. Introduction

B. Demolition of
Historic
Structures

C. Moving
Historic
Structures

A. INTRODUCTION

Historic buildings are irreplaceable community assets. With each successive demolition or removal, the integrity of the historic district is further eroded. Therefore, the demolition or moving of any contributing or nationally significant structure in the historic district must be considered carefully.

There are four types of designation for buildings in the Falmouth Historic District (FHD): Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 3, and Grade 4. With the exception of Grade 4 buildings, all buildings in the Falmouth Historic District are subject to review by the HDRC. Grade 1 buildings possess national, regional, and local significance and therefore warrant the highest degree of protection. Grade 1 buildings are subject to both interior and exterior review of alterations and changes, demolition review, and exterior paint colour review. Grade 2 buildings possess local significance and contribute to the overall character of the historic district, and are subject to exterior review of alterations and changes, demolition review, and exterior paint colour review. Grade 3 buildings are not historic but are in keeping with the character, size, and scale of the historic district, and hence are only subject to demolition review. Grade 4 buildings are either not historic or do not contribute to the character of the historic district and are not subject to review by the HDRC concerning demolition or alterations. See the Design Review Process outlined in Chapter 1 for more information concerning demolition review.

Plans to demolish or remove a Grade 1, Grade 2, or Grade 3 property must be approved by the HDRC. Upon receipt of an application for demolition or removal of a structure, the HDRC has 45 days to either approve or deny the request.

A partial demolition is defined as the moving, removing, encapsulation, or demolition of any contributing structure or property that will disturb or affect more than 15 square feet total of exterior wall, roof, or other exterior surface. Such activity shall be deemed an alteration subject to review by the HDRC for Grade 1, Grade 2, and Grade 3 buildings.

B. DEMOLITION OF HISTORIC STRUCTURES

Review Criteria for Demolition

The following factors shall be considered in determining whether or not to permit the moving, removing, encapsulation or demolition, in whole or in part, of a contributing structure in the historic district of Falmouth.

1. The historic, architectural or cultural significance of the specific structure or property, including, without limitation:
 - a. The age of the structure or property;
 - b. Whether, and to what extent, the building or structure is associated with a historic person, architect, master craftsman, or with a historic event;
 - c. Whether the building or structure is of such old or distinctive design, texture or material that it could not be reproduced, or could be reproduced only with great difficulty; and
 - d. The degree to which distinguishing characteristics, qualities, features, or materials remain.
2. Whether, and to what extent, a contributing structure is linked, historically or aesthetically, to other buildings or structures within the existing historic district, or is one of a group of properties within such a district whose concentration or continuity possesses greater significance than many of its component buildings.
3. The overall condition and structural integrity of the building or structure, as determined by a qualified professional engineer or architect.
4. Whether, and to what extent, the applicant proposes means, methods or plans for moving,

removing, or demolishing the structure or property that preserves portions, features or materials that are significant to the property's historic, architectural, or cultural value.

5. The public necessity of the proposed demolition.
6. The public purpose of interest in land or buildings to be protected.
7. Whether or not a relocation of the structure would be a practical and preferable alternative to demolition.
8. Whether or not the proposed demolition would affect adversely or positively other historic buildings or the character of the historic district.
9. The reason for demolishing the structure and whether or not alternatives exist.
10. Whether or not there has been a professional economic and structural feasibility study for rehabilitating or reusing the structure and whether or not its findings support the proposed demolition.

Guidelines for Demolition

1. Demolish a historic structure only after all preferable alternatives have been exhausted.
2. Document the building thoroughly through photographs and measured drawings. This information shall be retained by the Jamaica National Heritage Trust.
3. If the site is to remain vacant for any length of time, maintain the empty lot in a manner consistent with other open space in the district.

C. MOVING HISTORIC STRUCTURES

Review Criteria for Moving Historic Buildings

1. The public necessity of the proposed move.
2. The public purpose or interest in land or buildings to be protected.
3. The existing character of the setting of the structure or area and its surroundings.
4. Whether or not the proposed relocation would have a detrimental effect on the structural soundness of the building, and whether the proposed location is appropriate setting for the building.
5. Whether or not the proposed relocation would have a negative or positive effect on other sites or structures within the historic district.
6. Whether or not the proposed relocation would provide new surroundings that would be compatible with the architectural aspects of the structure.
7. Whether or not the proposed relocation is the only practical means of saving the structure from demolition.
8. Whether or not the structure will be relocated to another site within the historic district.

Guidelines for Moving Historic Buildings

1. Move buildings only after all alternatives to retention have been examined.
2. Seek assistance in documenting the building on its original site before undertaking the move.
3. Photograph the building and site thoroughly.
4. Measure the building to produce an accurate drawing for posterity and research purposes.
5. Thoroughly assess the building's structural condition in order to minimize any damage that might occur during the move.
6. Select a contractor who has experience in moving buildings.
7. Secure the structure from vandalism and potential weather damage before and after it is moved.
8. If the site is to remain vacant for any length of time, maintain empty lot in a manner consistent with other open space in the district.
9. Whenever possible, move buildings intact.
10. Once a building has been moved, make every effort to reestablish its historic orientation and