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## Values Enhanced Design Guidelines: Balancing Expert Knowledge with Community Values When Regulating New Construction in Historic Districts

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**Values Enhanced Design Guidelines:**

Balancing Expert Knowledge with Community Values When Regulating New  
Construction in Historic Districts

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May 2016

## SIGNATURES

Values Enhanced Design Guidelines:  
Balancing Expert Knowledge with Community Values When Regulating New Construction in  
Historic Districts

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my wife Elizabeth and my daughter Noura for their love and support throughout life and graduate school.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I owe a big thank you to Dr. Jeremy Wells for sticking with this thesis for a few years, and introducing me to values-based preservation planning. I owe a great deal of gratitude to Dr. Catherine Zipf for her insight and editing skills, as well as, helping to revise the focus of my thesis.

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Research Question:** This thesis intends to answer if non-professional stakeholder meanings can assess what is appropriate for new construction in historic districts, and whether those meanings coincide with the goals of the design review guidelines for Falmouth's historic districts.

**Results:** The meanings extrapolated from the non-professional Informants interviews, suggest new construction should be compatible with the surrounding streetscape, as suggested in the Falmouth's design review guidelines

**Practical Implications:** The study highlights that stakeholders with little or no background in the process of historic preservation design review can carefully understand and verbalize design criteria; and in addition, make decisions that are compatible with the goals set forth in Falmouth's design review guidelines. This in turn can provide substantive information to the historic districts commissions, and provide a meaningful avenue for the public to become involved in the preservation planning process.

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Since the inception of the first preservation ordinance establishing a historic district in 1931, little has changed in the process of how local historical commissions (HC) and historic district commissions (HDC) value historic resources. While the legislation and regulatory framework needed to enforce preservation ordinances has been well established, historical commission by-laws/ordinances lack the rules and regulations for engaging the public, leaving historical commissions and preservation planners no guidance when looking to establish stronger community ties. In Massachusetts, under the state enabling legislation Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40 section 8d and 40C, Local Historical Commissions and Historic District Commissions, are responsible for the following: Work as the “official agents of municipal government responsible for community-wide historic preservation planning, insuring the goals of historic preservation are considered in the planning and future development of the community.” The Historical Commission is also the “review authority responsible for regulatory design review within designated local historic districts.” Reviewing “applications for changes to exterior architectural features visible from a public way and have the ability to prevent demolitions and inappropriate alterations within local historic districts.” (Massachusetts Historical Commission, 2010, p.5). Under Chapter 40C, both commissions, herein known as historical commissions, can be combined and provide the functions as outlined above.

Historical commissions are sufficient at promoting historic significance and preserving architectural character, however, they have done little in promoting their mission to community organizations, businesses, and individuals affected by the regulations they administer. Robert Stipe (2003) asks, how can commissions better divert their attention toward the community at

large? This thesis looks to understand how commissions can assess the values of non-experts outside of the field of historic preservation and use these values to balance with the expert-dominated values of heritage management, particularly in regard to design review guidelines that govern the development of regulated local historic districts and infill construction within historic districts.

Scholars have noted the public's negative perception of historical commissions. The public at large generally perceives preservation as the interest of a privileged few. Thomas King (2003) acknowledges that in the context of historic preservation, many people perceive that cultural resources have been co-opted and dominated by disciplinary experts, to the disadvantage of ordinary citizens (p. 2). As Derek Worthing and Stephen Bond (2008), paraphrasing David Lowenthal (1985), state, "Our towns and cities are mostly intensely complex historical documents. Yet, though these are interpreted and understood by exceedingly few, their historicity is appreciated by the many" (p.25). Dolores Hayden (1995) suggests that in order to reach broader audiences, a conscious approach to preservation must transcend the traditional interpretations of history and architecture. Non-expert meanings about heritage need to be considered by preservation professionals by incorporating alternative ways of understanding value (Mason, Torre, 2002, p. 18). In order for historical commissions to reach a broader audience, historical commissions need to assess stakeholder values outside of preservation professionals to help assist in the reexamination of traditional preservation doctrine, and make preservation planning more participatory.

Changing the dominant, expert interpretations of history and architecture will first require historical commissions to adopt a methodology to understand the values of stakeholders affected by historical commission planning and regulatory control. Upon this foundation, a historical

commission could then formulate ways of managing change in local historic districts. Currently, guided by the objective characteristics of the National Register Criteria of Significance (1997) and the Secretary of the Interior Standards (1995), Historical commissions lack the appropriate tools for assessing subjective community values. By limiting the interpretation of significance to just preservation experts, this fabric-based approach limits the “process (es) by which certain elements of the built environment are chosen as being worthy of protection” (Worthing & Bond, 2008, p. 74). Derek Worthington and Stephen Bond (2008) elaborate further by stating, “conservation activity is often actually justified on the basis that society chooses to value certain things, whereas in reality ‘experts’...have decided what is valuable and why” (p. 74). Limiting preservation to expert-driven objective criteria disregards the variety of subjective values associated with experiencing heritage and ignores the changes that happen in communities and culture. According to Randall Mason (2006), “the question becomes how to preserve culture as a process when our preservation concepts and tools depend on us seeing culture as a set of artifacts with fairly fixed meanings to preserve and interpret” (p. 31).

The National Register criteria historical commissions use is considered a fabric-based planning approach to valuing historic resources, which bases significance and authenticity on historical facts and confirmed historical building fabric (Wells, 2010, p. 37). The fabric-based approach relies on objective archaeological, and architectural design values associated with a historic property. In this approach, the opinion of experts is needed to interpret whether or not a historic property meets the criteria of significance (Harrison, 2010, p. 25).

One of the primary goals of a historical commission is to identify and protect a community’s historic resources (Bowsher, 1978, p. 11). To do this, a historical commission abides by the National Register Criteria of Significance (1997) to aid in identifying resources and

to establish historical and architectural significance. Subsequently, historical commissions refer to design guidelines based upon the Secretary of the Interior Standards (1995) to approach the treatment of historic properties (Massachusetts Historical Commission, 2010). This fabric-centered National Register Criteria of Significance provides context for interpreting the Secretary's Standards. Most local historical commission bylaw/ordinances require the guidance of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards when protecting historic resources (Donahoe, 2004). In sum, fabric-based criteria is the dominant ideological underpinning of preservation planning undertaken by local historical commissions, including those in Massachusetts.

In contrast, values-based planning involves identifying and assessing what is significant about a place by engaging stakeholders, and devising management strategies, processes and actions which focus on the need to enhance and protect those stakeholder values (Worthing & Bond, 2008, p. 54). The Burra Charter (Australia ICOMOS, 1999) established the idea of managing historic resources by engaging the values of local stakeholders and then formulating management plans based upon the stakeholder conception of significance. Significance, according to the Burra Charter (Australia ICOMOS, 1999), “means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual values for past, present or future generations, and is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects” (Article 1. Definitions). The Burra Charter and the values-based approach recognize a range of subjective stakeholder values ascribed to a place within a framework of typologies: aesthetic, historic, scientific, and social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations — as opposed to the fabric-based approach, which relies on objective archaeological, and architectural design values associated with a historic property. Mason (2006) states, “Though concern with fabric remains central to values-centered preservation and all activities and discourses of the

historic preservation field, values-centered preservation decisions place priority on understanding why the fabric is valuable and how to keep it that way, and only then moving on to decide how to arrest decay” (p. 34).

In order to gain a clearer understanding of subjective values, historical commissions need to engage the public with the participatory methods such as those used in other planning professions and the social sciences. Local historical commissions, utilizing a values-led approach, can begin to fully understand the range of values at play by soliciting the views of stakeholders, and begin to formulate the protection of typologies within a community – meaning the elements of the built environment that are worthy of protection (Worthing & Bond, 2008, p.74). As Na Li and Elisabeth Hamin (2012) suggest, “These questions require more deliberative processes that engage and value the opinions of non-experts” (p. 182). Mason (2006) stresses that participation is “acknowledged widely as one of the urgent needs in contemporary preservation practice”, which is “part and parcel of the values-centered model of preservation” (p. 31). The focus of a values-based approach is that the symbolic nature of heritage is not embodied in the object but attributed to and generated by the stakeholders themselves (Muñoz Viñas, 2005, p. 160). Preservation planners and subsequently local historical commissions need to seek the participation of stakeholders and assess and incorporate their values into the planning and protection of historic resources. Mason (2006) suggests that “Different methods and partners are needed to build knowledge of the various value types. The importance of multi-disciplinary teamwork and mutual respect for and understanding of different disciplinary discourses, cannot be overstressed—it will be the basis for the next cultural shift within the preservation field” (p. 37). Ultimately the participation of non-experts is the root of the values-based paradigm.



Unfortunately there is no clear set of methodological guidelines for how to assess subjective values associated with the historic environment. The question becomes: what tools can preservationist incorporate in the process to elicit values from non-experts to help aid in the planning process? This thesis seeks to understand non-expert values, using social science methods, to help aid in the planning for the protection of local historic districts.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The problem being addressed is that local historical commissions lack the tools necessary to elicit the values of non-expert stakeholders in the process of preservation planning, thus limiting the participation of stakeholders in the protection of a community's heritage. By understanding how non-expert stakeholders perceive a proposed alteration to their historic environment, preservation planners and local historical commissions can incorporate community meanings into how infill within local historic districts are regulated, potentially clarifying the differing interpretations of Standard 9 – the standard responsible for regulating new infill construction — and grounding district regulation within a community context.

Originally, the Standards were utilized as criteria that would help the National Park Service determine if changes to rehabilitated properties were appropriate. In turn, the developer or property owner would receive a tax credit for the appropriate rehabilitation of the property. Historical commissions have adopted the Standards – in this case, Standard 9 – as a guideline to what an appropriate design is and whether or not that design will match the form, scale, and massing of the district the historical commission oversees. Unfortunately the wording of the standard is quite ambiguous, which ultimately leads historical commissions to interpret the standard in various ways, causing inconsistency in commission decision making (Skerry, 2012, p. 6). Standard 9 has provided for the greatest measure of controversy. Architects and

preservation professionals have established differing approaches to what is deemed appropriate for new infill construction in historic districts. The vague wording of Standard 9, and the criteria of differentiating the old from the new, has produced many variations in design philosophy, often stressing differentiation through modernist design principles or, more recently, compatibility through traditional historicized design (p. 19). As a result, the unclear language of the Standards creates varying interpretations and decisions on the part of local historical commissions, ultimately lending less credibility and consistency to the process of design review.

In reviewing the literature, it is apparent that most historical commissions utilize the Secretary of the Interior's Standards when looking for guidance on the design of new infill construction in local historic districts (Donahoe 2004). Addressing historical commissions' disconnect from local context, Stipe (2003) feels it worrying that "many local commissions...use some combination of the National Register criteria and the Secretary's Standards as design guidelines, rather than those specially derived from the overall character of each local district" (p.476). Cities such as Denver, San Antonio, and many other municipalities have requested the input of non-expert community stakeholders, through planning workshops, in the approval of expert-derived historic district design guidelines. Mason and Avrami (2000) admit that too few tools have been established for this type of analysis, and only through implementation and continued research can we evaluate a values-based planning process (p. 19). Preservation planners, and ultimately historical commissions, must consider non-expert values in determining the development of design guidelines, to balance an "expert-centric" preservation planning process and develop a planning method that caters to how community's value architecture. The crucial question is: How can non-expert values inform and guide local historical commissions

when developing design review guidelines, specifically for new infill construction, that engage the community in the protection of its architectural heritage?

### **1.3 Background and Need**

This thesis attempts to understand specific historic preservation principles from the perspective of a non-expert with the aim of balancing the expert-driven paradigm of fabric-based preservation planning with the values of the community at large. Assessing what or why something is significant to a community's preservation planning efforts has evolved to include a diverse range of stakeholders but the framework for assessing and integrating non-expert stakeholder values into the planning process is still in a formative period. Values taken from stakeholders, such as citizens and related professionals, may differ from the empirical values preservation professionals are trained to protect. The difficulty lies in devising and implementing preservation policies that take into account how non-preservation professionals evaluate and continually reevaluate architecture and building practices, specifically in historic settings. As Eleftherios Pavlides explains, "Most regulations which do not take into account the social measuring of architecture meet resistance and non-compliance from people who experience the pressures of their own cultural milieu" (Pavlides, 1983, p. 23). For regulations to resonate and positively strengthen a non-expert's perception and appreciation of the historical and aesthetic values espoused by preservation experts and doctrine, preservation "must have meaning for the society in which it exists if it is to endure as a representation of culture" (Pavlides, 1983, p. 23). Ultimately, this meaning must include a diverse range of perceptions from non-experts when planning for the preservation of the built environment.

Incorporating a diverse range of subjective viewpoints into a planning process dominated by observable and measurable preservation doctrine may seem daunting. But, an expert

dominated perspective is not indicative of a democratic society that seeks to establish a voice for all stakeholders involved. By contrast, other planning professionals for the built environment have been able to accomplish this task. This thesis will pilot one method to assess and integrate subjective non-expert values into the fabric-based preservation planning process in a way that is effective, efficient, and reliable.

#### **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to create and test a consistent method for integrating non-expert values into the planning process for the preservation of the built environment — specifically as it relates to new infill construction in historic districts. This thesis will focus on the process of design review in Massachusetts. While the public is allowed to voice concerns and opinions during historical commission meetings in Massachusetts, non-experts members of the community have very little input in the preservation and regulation of historic districts.

By possessing a greater understanding of how non-expert stakeholders perceive the dominant expert interpretation of the Secretary of the Interior Standard's for Rehabilitation, preservation planners and local historical commissions can incorporate non-expert perceptions into how infill within historic districts is regulated, potentially clarifying the differing expert interpretations of Standard 9 and grounding district regulation within a local context. Conversely, establishing a method for assessing non-expert values democratizes the preservation process and helps fill the gap in literature pertaining to this subject.

#### **1.5 Significance to the Field**

This thesis will contribute to the field of value-based preservation planning and assess whether the values of non-experts can be integrated into the design review process by preservation professionals. It seeks to understand how non-experts perceive the design decisions

of preservation experts and to gain an overall understanding of how non-experts comprehend architectural design in historic settings. More importantly, this thesis will look at ways in which historical commissions and preservation planners can incorporate community perceptions in district design regulations and begin to further engage people who are traditionally excluded from the preservation planning process.

## **1.6 Definitions**

Fabric-based preservation planning: Fabric-based planning bases significance and authenticity on historical facts and confirmed historical building fabric such that objective archaeological, and architectural design values are associated with a historic property. The sole determination of experts is needed to interpret whether or not a historic property meets the criteria of significance (Harrison, 2010, p. 25; Wells, 2010, p. 37).

Values-based preservation planning: Values-based planning is identifying and assessing what is significant about a place by engaging stakeholders and devising management strategies, processes, and actions which focus on the need to enhance and protect those stakeholder values (Worthing & Bond, 2008, p. 54).

Empiricist-Positivist Approach: The empiricist-positivist concept of significance is defined as follows: “all claims to knowledge that pertain to empirical reality must be either direct reports of experience or observation, or statements that can be derived from such reports” (Tainter and Lucas, p. 712).

Historicized Design: “Design that seeks to resurrect architectural styles from the past by either replicating historic buildings or by using historic architectural detailing in contemporary architectural design” (Skerry, 2012, p. 9).

Modern Design: “An architectural movement that began in the early Twentieth

Century that is characterized by simplistic forms and the lack of traditional ornament.

The term is usually used to describe a concept that rejects past historical precedents and strives to create something new and functional, utilizing contemporary methods and materials” (Skerry, 2012, p .10).

Intentional Opposition (Differentiation): Design that seeks to depart from the context of an established setting and alter the character through contrast, therefore favoring differentiation over compatibility (Semes, 2009, p. 223).

Compatibility: Design that sustains the pre-existing character of a site (Semes, 2009, p. 169).

Literal Replication: Design that seeks to expand upon an existing ensemble or context by reproducing or imitating the form, material, and detail. This approach favors compatibility over differentiation (Semes, 2009, p. 173).

Invention within a Style: Design within an existing context that seeks to add new elements in either the same style or a closely related one. This approach creates a balance between differentiation and compatibility but favors the latter (Semes, 2009, p. 187).

Abstract Reference: Design that defers to existing context while avoiding literal replication or working in a particular historical style; favors differentiation but seeks balance with compatibility (Semes, 2009, p. 209).

Stakeholders: Individuals within a community that have a stake in the process and outcome of a specific project or planning decision. For the purposes of this research and thesis, stakeholders are New Bedford residents and are defined in greater detail in Chapter 3.

Historic District Design Review: “A process for ensuring the protection of the character of historic buildings, usually designated or located within in a local historic district. The historic design review process is often carried out by a government appointed commission that usually

has the power to review, approve, conditionally approve, disapprove, or even postpone applications for projects concerning new construction, additions, exterior alterations, or demolition” (Skerry, 2012, p. 9).

The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation – Standard #9: “New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment” (NPS, 1995).

Scale: Size of a building relative to its surrounding.

Massing: The expanse or bulk of a building. The mass of a building can be described as the boxlike forms that fit together to create the overall building shape and footprint. Massing is the three-dimensional form of a structure.

Materials: All of the building fabric involve in its structure and/or construction. In reviewing materials, all elements must be considered, including foundations, wall, trim, windows and doors, and roofing materials.

Roof Form: The shape or form of the roof. The most common roof form in Falmouth, MA, is a side or front gable found both on modest residences and prominent civic and commercial buildings. Hipped roofs are also prominent.

Fenestration: Arrangement of windows or doors on an elevation or façade

## **1.7 Ethical Considerations**

All research utilizing human subjects at Roger Williams University (RWU) requires approval by the Human Subject Review Board (HSRB) (RWU Human

Subjects Review Board Policy Manual, 2003). The researcher submitted an Individual Research Project Proposal to the RWU Human Subject Review Board, which described the study and methods and what type of data would be collected. The researcher endeavored to protect participants from harm and outlined all procedures to participants and to the review board. This proposal was approved as expedited by the HSRB board on February 4, 2016 (Appendix A).

The researcher provided an informed consent form (Appendix B), which was reviewed and signed by all participants and the researcher. The consent form outlined what was required of the participant, including procedures, risks, benefits, confidentiality, and emphasizing that participation in this study is completely voluntary and participants could choose to opt out at any time. The participants were informed that a pseudonym for their identity was to be used for the study.



## **CHAPTER 2: HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This literature review will examine the process of historic district design review as it functions within the larger practice of historic preservation planning, and how the National Park Service's criteria of significance shapes the overall process of preservation planning and design review. Ultimately, the criteria of significance defines the range of meanings people experience towards heritage, thereby limiting the plurality of community values historic preservation professionals can plan for and revealing an inherent limitation in the fabric-based preservation process. This literature review will also provide an overview of the historic district design review process, examine the concept of the historic district and the underlying framework that supports and protects the historic resources within a district, understand how the concept of significance in the fabric-based preservation process limits how local historical commissions value and protect heritage, and how a values-based preservation process assesses the values of stakeholders prior to planning for the protection of historic resources and how it may overcome the limitations of the fabric-based process. The literature reviewed for this thesis will be addressed as it relates to how local historical commissions in Massachusetts assess significance, engage the public, and protect historic resources.

### **2.2 Design Review Defined**

Historic district design review parallels design review within the built environment that does not pertain to historic significance. The process of design review has been most succinctly defined by Stamps (2000) as a governmental function intended to shape the physical development of a geographical area in a manner which reflects the public determination of what that area should look like in the future (p. 9). Design review is relatively novel and distinct from

most zoning, subdivision and building regulation in its emphasis on appearance (Nasar & Grannis, 1999, p. 424). Design review can be advisory to a body such as the city council, but a majority (82 percent) is legally binding (Scheer & Preiser, 1994, p. 2). Design review addresses virtually every aspect of external appearance, from building height to window shape to energy efficiency (Stamps, 2000).

Design guidelines are established by local planning departments, typically overseen by planning officials and local design review boards, and, according to Stamps and Nassar (1997), “seventy-eight percent of the reporting cities did publish written design guidelines. Only twenty percent used quantifiable rules, thirteen percent used suggestive drawings or diagrams, and twenty one percent used general principles or goals” (p. 12). In sum, design guidelines control the physical development of a community but vary in regulatory scope and intent from community to community.

### **2.2.1 Rationale of Design Review**

Reiko Habe (1989) acknowledges that the rationale of design review is to overcome the failures of planning, specifically zoning, and maintain the environmental harmony of a community. In his article, “Public design control in American communities”, Habe states that the “methodology adopted by each community, the notion of protecting, enhancing or even creating desirable community character...is often considered one of the important objectives of design control” (p. 195). Protecting and enhancing community character is seen as improving a community’s quality of life and can be achieved in various ways, such as conserving distinctive features that add to a sense of place (Green, 1999, p. 313). According to Scheer and Preiser (1994), design review seeks to address “preserving and enhancing a unique place; maintaining or upgrading the “vitality” of a place; making a comfortable and safe environment for pedestrians;

improving/protecting property values; making change more acceptable; [and] making new developments compatible or unified” (p. 3). Furthermore, Scheer and Preiser add that a rarely mentioned aspect of design review is to involve the community in establishing order and regulating development (p. 3). This idea is further elaborated on below.

### **2.2.2 Process of Design Review:**

The process of design review varies in each community according to how the ordinance or by-law is written and the how much enabling power is granted to the municipality by the state. Stamps (2000) posits that a single planner with a checklist can perform design review. The process can also be more exacting, “involving a pre-application review between a project applicant and the planning staff, notification of any interested citizen or citizen’s groups, meetings with citizen’s design review boards, further meetings with planning staff, a decision by an appointed planning commission, appeals to elected boards, and appeals to the courts” (p. 6). As mentioned above, most design review is accompanied by design guidelines. Design guidelines are an important part of the review process, but most guidelines function as recommendations and are not legally binding. Scheer and Preiser (1994) indicate that 40 percent have legal ramifications. Furthermore, most municipality guidelines do not have an established format and are assembled by planners from multiple sources (p. 2).

The role of the public in the process is generally limited to comments during public meetings or involvement in focus groups and charrettes. However, John Punter (2007) points out “there is a clear trend not just towards public consultation in design matters, but towards the public defining the principles of control and contributing to the administration of the control process itself” (p. 503). Direct public involvement in crafting preservation policy is limited. The role of the public remains an undefined, yet evolving, area in the review process.

### **2.3 Historical Context of the Historic District**

The protection of concentrated, historically significant buildings manifested in different forms prior to the historic district becoming incorporated as a concept in the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA). For the purpose of this thesis, the National Register Bulletin defines a district as a collection of buildings that physically and “spatially comprise a specific environment: groups of related buildings that represent the standards and tastes of a community or neighborhood during one period of history, unrelated structures that represent a progression of various styles and functions, or cohesive townscapes or streetscapes that possess an identity of place” (National Park Service, 1985, p. 11). Prior to the enactment of the NHPA, the development of the historic district was modeled on precedent. Colonial Williamsburg, the Vieux Carre district in New Orleans, Beacon Hill in Boston, the island of Nantucket were amongst the first districts established in the U.S. (Hamer, 1998, pp. 1-10). The Philadelphia Historical Commission was the first public agency to control alterations to historic buildings within an entire city. Previous to the NHPA, federal law understood historic resources as sites, buildings, and objects. When the NHPA introduced districts, it drastically shifted the context of historic preservation (p. 18). The NHPA created the National Register of Historic Places – which defines what a historic resource is — and added historic districts as a resource, in doing so providing a principal pipeline for federal funds to flow towards historic preservation and the creation of historic districts (p. 18).

There is a difference between National Register Districts and Local Historic Districts. National Register Districts provide recognition of a district’s historical and architectural significance based on federal and state standards and places no obligations on the owner of the property to protect historically significant architectural fabric. The National Register designation

does not impose restrictions on what an owner can do with their property. However, if a state or federally funded project threatens a site on the National Register, a process known as the Section 106 review is enacted. Section 106 seeks to mitigate damage or find alternatives to altering or destroying the property. A National Register property can still be altered or demolished if no alternatives are found (Stipe, 2003, p. 45).

In contrast, historical commissions and the design review process operate within local zoning overlays, which empower municipalities to establish local historic districts. Locally designated historic districts go further in controlling and protecting the fabric of a district's character. Locally designated historic districts are established through town meeting or city council vote and provide a regulatory review process of all changes to exterior features seen from a public way (Massachusetts Historical Commission, 2003, p. 2). Local districts give officials the legal authority to control the aesthetics of a historically significant area (Hamer, 1998, p. 21).

### **2.3.1. Historic District and Design Review:**

Local historic commissions were the earliest regulatory bodies to hold design review meetings. In 1931, Charleston, South Carolina, established its preservation review board to approve changes to exterior details within the Old and Historic Charleston District (Lea, 2003, p. 7). The Historic District Ordinance of 1931 created a review board that consisted of five members drawn from local real estate agents, architects, engineers, planners, and artists. The review board approved applications for building permits and certificates of occupancy (Cox, 2005, p. 1) but did not hold regulatory control over design or demolitions prior to a revision of the ordinance in 1959 (Lea, 2003, p. 8). Charleston adopted this zoning ordinance without enabling legislation from the state, setting a precedent for the creation of historic districts

throughout the country, such as the Vieux Carre in New Orleans in 1936 and San Antonio, Texas, in 1939 (Tyler, 2009, pp. 38-39). As of 2009, three thousand communities in the United States have historic districts; seventy five percent have some level of design review that is administered by a review board (Tyler, 2009, p. 115). The growth in the number of commissions exemplifies the importance of a local community's input in design review to protect their town or city's historic character and resources.

### **2.3.2. Commission Membership**

Citizens play an important role in historical commissions at the municipal level. Historical commissions are composed of and staffed by citizens from the community. In most cases, five to seven members are appointed by a mayor, city council, or board of selectmen, with municipality or county residency required. In some instances, the planning commission, planning department, or the town council function as the review board (Bowsher, 1978, p. 14). Stacey Donahoe (2004) states, "Regardless of the size of the review boards, one thing that nearly all the cities had in common was the fact that the board members were volunteers. An overwhelming majority, fifty-six of the cities, relied on board members to donate their time in the task of reviewing designs for the city" (p. 24). Cities such as Atlanta, Georgia, and Washington, DC, pay commission members for their time (Donahoe, 2004). Some ordinances set qualification standards for members. Historical commission members generally have to have an interest in historic preservation, with specialization in architectural history, architecture, law, and real estate (Cox, 2002, p. 3). In short, citizens with specialized knowledge play a vital part in the function of historical commissions.

### 2.3.3. Legal Precedent

Historic preservation zoning ordinances are a direct corollary to the police power conferred upon states by the tenth amendment of the Constitution. The tenth amendment gives state governments the right to regulate and enforce laws for the benefit of their communities (Stipe, 2003; Cox, 2002). The 1926 U.S Supreme Court decision in *Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty* (1926) upheld the constitutionality of local zoning ordinances and established the ability of municipalities to regulate land use through the exercise of their police powers (Duerksen & Roddewig, 2002, p. 3). As Cofresi and Radtke (2003) state, the core of local preservation activity throughout the United States centers on the use by local governments of the states' sovereign authority to regulate citizens in their personal conduct and in the use of their property (p. 131). States delegate to local communities through enabling legislation the right to regulate property. In Massachusetts, for instance, a statewide enabling statute, Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40C, known as the Historic Districts Act, was passed in 1960 to empower local governments to establish local historic districts (Massachusetts Historical Commission, 2003, p. 4). Zoning bylaws/ordinances, which inevitably include historic property, enforce the regulation of property at the local level and directly impact an individual's property rights.

*Berman v. Parker* (1954) and *Maher v. City of New Orleans* (1974) are important cases for establishing the constitutional foundations for design review and affirmative maintenance, and are crucial in legally justifying historic preservation ordinances based on aesthetics. *Berman v. Parker* (1954) established the legal authority to regulate private property based upon aesthetic zoning. *Maher v. City of New Orleans* (1974) provided precedent for historic districts pursuing the stated legitimate goal of preserving "tout ensemble" and affirmative maintenance, which required the owner to maintain the property in compliance with the ordinance (Maher v. The City

of New Orleans, 1975). “Tout ensemble” as Diane Lea posits, is the “idea that the character of an area is derived from its entirety, or the sum of its parts, rather than from the character of its individual buildings” (Lea, 2003, p. 7). *Berman* and *Maher* set aesthetics-based historic preservation ordinances within the larger context of land use planning and regulation. Legally, courts have only addressed historic and architectural character through aesthetics and have yet to decide on a case based upon historical significance or authenticity.

#### **2.3.4. Process of Historic District Design Review**

Design review procedures vary in complexity and formality according to municipality and commission members. One of the main goals of historical commission design review is to approve certificates of appropriateness (COA). Certificates of appropriateness are issued when a historical commission determines that the construction or alteration for which the application for work has been filed will be appropriate or compatible with the preservation or protection of the historic district (Cox, 2002). In general, the design review moves through multiple stages; it involves preliminary application review by the historical commission before the final design is complete, with subsequent conveyance of the historical commission’s expectations to applicant. The historical commission staff then reviews the submittal and comments on issues that conflict with district guidelines. These comments are intended to generate revisions in advance of the final submittal. Depending on how the ordinance is written, according to Alice Meriwether Bowsher (1978), ordinances can “spell out in detail the submissions that must accompany an application for review; they may include building plans, elevations, specifications, samples of materials and colors, site plans, photographs of the project and its surroundings and proposed signs, landscaping, and exterior lighting” (Bowsher, 1978, p. 15). Some ordinances allow the review board to make the determination as to what they need presented to approve a COA. The



final review by the historical commission takes place during a public meeting, with outstanding issues highlighted by the commissioners. The historical commission then votes on whether to approve the COA (Gorski, 2009, pp. 6, 7). The COA acknowledges that the work reviewed by the board is acceptable and a building or zoning permit is then issued, allowing work to begin.

### **2.3.5 Traditional Rationale for Historic District Design Review**

The traditional rationale for design review is to protect the historical and architectural character of a district. Historical and architectural precedents have been the crucial associative values related to historic district design review. In her book, *Design Review in Historic Districts*, Alice Meriwether Bowsher (1978) concisely states, “the main purpose of historic district review is to maintain existing district character based on considerations of architectural history, architecture and design” (p. 11). Traditionally, historic preservation ordinances are zoning overlay districts that protect concentrated areas of historic and architecturally significant structures or sites (Smith, 1983, p. 556). Within that defined area, the local preservation ordinance will regulate the design of insensitive and unwarranted change to exterior features of the district deemed historically and architecturally valuable (Cassity, 1996, p.3; Cox, 2002, p. 2). Historic district ordinances “share the common goal of maintaining the character of an existing historic district on the basis of architectural history and design considerations, and by means of a municipally appointed board with the power to review proposed changes to the built environment” (Cox, 2002, p. 1). This viewpoint has traditionally been the basis for historic district design review.

### **2.3.6 Historic District Design Guidelines**

Historic District Design Guidelines are used to guide the decisions of a historical commission. “Design guidelines provide a framework for deciding appropriateness; a checklist

against which to measure the standard defined in the state enabling act” (Bowsler, 1978, p.25). Guidelines for appropriateness may be written into the legal framework of the ordinance or may be adopted separately as an advisory tool for the review board (p. 25). The Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation are used by the majority of commissions as guiding principles. In 2004, Stacey Donahoe surveyed sixty-five American cities and discovered that at minimum, most commissions follow:

The basic preservation philosophy of the Standards, and most go even further by including the Standards verbatim in their guidelines. Several cities depend on the Standards exclusively, without customizing them for their own resources and needs, though the majority use the Secretary of Interior’s Standards as a base and add their own specific guidelines on top. The study found that outdated versions of the Standards are still being used in many cities, highlighting the failure of cities to keep their guidelines updated. (Donahoe, 2004, p.55)

The same survey also acknowledged that fifty three of the cities would like to have written guidelines that are more specific to their needs (p. 26). Rachel Cox (2002) points out that the Standards’ content and phrasing is too broad for local application. Cox feels that a “truly effective, efficient, and relatively conflict free” design review process should incorporate “community goals, along with detailed guidelines for achieving them” (p. 4). Irrespective, the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards remain the single most prevalent influence on the design review decisions of local historical commissions.

### **2.3.7 The Process of Creating Historic District Design Guidelines**

The process of creating design guidelines for a local historic district is closely tied to local surveys, and in the case of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) inventory Form B. The MHC inventory Form B is a crucial part of establishing design guidelines in the state. As the MHC (2010) states, the inventory form aids local historical commissions in planning for the protection of a community’s significant historic resources (p.

14). A completed survey form will contain but is not limited to, a building's date of construction, architectural style and description, historic and current uses, architectural and historical narrative (p. 10). I will summarize the role of Form Bs in the process of creating design guidelines, specifically the process the City of New Bedford required of a consultant when creating guidelines for the New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park Historic District.

A requirement for the creation of the design guidelines, as with the creation of the Form B inventory and the local survey, is that the consultant have professional qualifications such as a bachelor's degree in historic preservation, architectural history, art history or a closely related field and at least two years full time experience in an area relevant to the creation of guidelines, or a master's degree in historic preservation architectural history, art history or a closely related field (City of New Bedford, 2013).

The consultant must reference several sources to create the guidelines: New Bedford's Form B inventory, National Register nominations and other relevant documents; the city ordinance pertaining to the creation of the New Bedford Historical Commission; historical commission rules and regulations; existing design guidelines for the district; the public law creating the New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park; the management plan for the New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park; the review of the National Park Service Cultural Landscape Report, and maps related to the historic district and other sample design guidelines (City of New Bedford, 2013). The consultant must conduct a survey of the district to become familiar with the architecture and historically significant resources, and review the Form B's, if available, for each property in the district. The consultant must also obtain examples of appropriate and inappropriate alterations or repairs. The process also calls for public outreach

and education through public meetings with property owners and other interested members of the community.

Once all of this content has been reviewed the consultant creates the final product that is the design guidelines. This product must include but is not limited to: “digital photographs of representative architectural forms, and features, and styles; examples of appropriate versus inappropriate alterations, which can be illustrations or photographs not necessarily from New Bedford; written recommendation outlining areas of the existing guidelines that are in need of revision and a summary of new sections that should be created” (City of New Bedford, 2013). All design objectives, guidelines, and recommendations produced and developed as part of the project shall be in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings (City of New Bedford, 2013).

The consultant must then present the progress of the design guidelines at a public NBHC meeting and make revisions to the guidelines based on NBHC input. After revisions have been made, a draft of the guidelines is presented at a second NBHC meeting. With input from this last public meeting, the consultant will then present the final draft of design guidelines at the final NBHC public meeting for approval by the commission. As mentioned above, the overarching design objectives of the district design guidelines is based on architectural significance established in local surveys, such as the Form B form.

### **2.3.8 Local Surveys and Determining Significance**

Local surveys and their historical and architectural context statements create the foundation for which properties and districts are to be protected and ultimately provide the basis for district design guidelines. Commissions are tasked with surveying and evaluating what

resources need to be protected. According to Rachel Cox (2002), most “commissions are charged with the duty of conducting historic surveys”...[and] designat[ing] and regulat[ing] historic properties” (p. 3). Historical commissions base their survey work on the National Register criteria established in Bulletin No. 24. Since the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register criteria have defined how commissions value local historic resources. The National Register’s (1995) criteria for significance was expanded under the NHPA to include properties of local and state significance and ultimately frames how historic resources come under protection within local historic districts. Randall Mason (2003) believes that the “statement of significance” is the rationale for why a landscape, place, or building has meaning, and ultimately why it is protected. He maintains that “Once defined, significance is used as a basis for policy, planning and design decisions” (p. 64).

Local surveys are based upon the historical context statement and form the criteria commissions use to assess the importance of properties that merit protection. The National Register Bulletin No. 24 (1985) states that a local survey is a “process of identifying and gathering data on a community’s historic resources” (p. 2). Historical context, as defined by Bulletin No. 24, is “a broad pattern of historical development in a community or its region that may be represented by historic resources”. Through this context, the data from the survey must be evaluated to “meet defined criteria of historical, architectural, archeological, or cultural significance” (pp. 2, 14). The Bulletin advises that practitioners use historic context statements to strategize survey goals and evaluate survey data to winnow down an inventory of significant properties (pp. 2, 15). Examples of such data, according to the Bulletin, are periods of construction, architectural styles or method of construction, a person responsible for the design, quality of style, design or workmanship (p. 9). Local surveys are crucial to determining a

property or district's significance and are based on the criteria established by the National Register of Historic Places

## **2.4 Epistemology of Significance**

Historical significance was also founded on the empiricist-positivist model of history, which reinforces objective truth and fact in past events (Wells, 2010, p. 464). In their seminal work, "Epistemology of The Significance Concept", Joseph Tainter and G. John Lucas (1983) explain the empiricist-positivist concept of significance, defined as "all claims to knowledge that pertain to empirical reality must be either direct reports of experience or observation, or statements that can be derived from such reports" (p. 712). Empirical evidence has largely driven preservation philosophy. For example, the National Register Bulletin No. 24 (1985) criteria for significance is based on expert derived empirical evidence grounded in American history, architecture, engineering, archeology, and culture (p. 18).

Michael Tomlan (1999) acknowledges that preservationists work from historical data such as dates of construction, alterations, and the occurrence of certain events (p. 204). A standardized conception of historical data assumes that meaning is perceived the same by all or at least by professionals with the proper training (Tainter & Lucas, 1983, p. 713). But, According to Tainter and Lucas, individuals create their own concept of significance. Tainter and Lucas (1983) posit that if "meaning is assigned by the human mind...rather than fixed to inherent properties, then it is subject to variation between individuals, and to change through time" (p. 714). A fixed criteria to substantiate significance cannot evolve with changing perceptions of historical meaning. This proves problematic if people apply significance subjectively, outside of a standardized objective fixed criteria. If non-experts value heritage subjectively, then their view can present challenges for how preservationists currently protect heritage.

Preservationists apply importance to historic resources based on historical facts and objective qualities related to building and landscape fabric that can be verified empirically. Traditionally, significance is based on what the historian (preservationist) believes is an important moment in time — preservationists generally value what was significant fifty years ago — not what is perceived as significant today. Tomlan (1999) explains that “activities or functions that occurred in a given location at a point in time, do so no longer; hence the historian must supply the activity for the site to gain significance” (p. 204). An empirical process verified by trained professionals marginalizes how a great majority of people value heritage. That is to say, the public at large does not perceive significance through a fixed empirical criteria. The use of the expert to solely assess significance disadvantages the values of the local community, meaning expert knowledge is valued above local non-expert perception when assessing the significance of a site. The trained expert may not possess the experience of living in a community and may be unfamiliar with local norms and traditions that do not meet the standards established for the National Register.

Once the significance of a resource is embedded in a historic narrative, it is “taken as a matter of faith, and a priesthood (historians, architects and preservation professionals) and a group of the faithful (preservationists) interpret the results for the public” (Mason, 2003, p. 66). Therefore, the difficulty, Tomlan explains, is that the more solidified the professional preservationist/historian’s concept of the past is, the more convinced the public will be of the significance of the property (p. 204). Therefore, fixing significance at a point in time makes it hard for meaning to evolve, therefore inhibiting the creation of new meanings for a place. Tainter and Lucas (1983) believe this approach makes no “provision for future achievement of significance” (p. 715). Tomlan (1999) believes that if preservationists continue to abide by an

unchanging canon of significance, then preservationists are bound to lose the support of the public (p. 204). As a result, the empiricist-positivist approach limits the perspectives to those that professionals can verify as an observable physical characteristic or a historic fact of a site or object.

Ultimately, an empiricist-positivist based ideology in historic preservation has influenced federal legislation and the concept of significance. The empiricist-positivist rationale has governed federal legislation since the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. A Supreme Court decision in 1888 upheld a statute reinforcing the notion of national significance and the practice that condemning a property to be preserved for public use can only be done if the value of such an act were for the benefit of the entire nation. This decision subsequently influenced early federal preservation legislation, such as the 1906 Antiquities Act, the 1935 Historic Site Act, and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Tainter & Lucas, 1983, p. 707). The Historic Sites Act of 1935 created a significance-based criteria that subsequently became embedded in the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (p. 708). The Historic Sites Act's (1935) selection standards called for a survey of "historic and archaeological sites, buildings, and objects for the purpose of determining which possess exceptional value as commemorating or illustrating the history of the United States" (National Park Service, p. 1). This criteria still guides much of the planning the National Park Service does around the historic built environment (Tainter & Lucas, 1983, p. 708).

Tainter and Lucas also point out that the growing preservation profession looked to create ways of efficiently categorizing resources when traditional values made way for cultural characteristics, further solidifying the significance concept. Tainter and Lucas (1983) explain that the "significance dilemma" paralleled a change from the importance of preserving buildings



based on “associative values” – meaning association with great people or events in American history – to an interest in artistic and cultural characteristics. The subsequent need for a selection criteria and a rapidly emerging preservation profession perpetuated the notion and development of the significance concept (p. 707). Nevertheless, significance standards were “designed in response to concerns of associative and architectural preservation” (p. 709). As a result, the success of the significance concept in legal precedent, such as the Historic Sites Act of 1935 and NHPA of 1966, provided a firm footing for significance to be utilized in furthering the acceptance of preservation as a legal protection and federal funding tool. In sum, the criteria of significance is important to the preservation profession and should not be discounted. But, its fixation of meaning at a specific event or person in time, much like preservation doctrine’s fixation of truth and fact in historic building fabric, discounts how the public generally experiences historic places.

#### **2.4.1 Objectivity and Preservation Doctrine**

Early preservation debates and doctrine instilled the materiality of the historic building fabric with “truth as an absolute rather than relative truths existing in the realm of cultural meanings and values. In other words, [historic resources] communicate the one, single reality in which it should exist” (Wells, 2007, p. 1). Material, not the meaning people extend to historic fabric, ultimately gives value to the historic resource. As Wells (2010) suggests, the foundation of a preservation ethic that emphasizes the “truthful treatment of building fabric and place was derived from nineteenth-century European building conservation debates” (p. 465). From the debates of John Ruskin and Viollet-le-Duc to the scientific approach of Italian architect Camillo Boito – whose *restauro scientifico* maintained truth as the guiding principal that could be determined objectively – paved the way for a conservation ethic dominated by expert objective

values (Muñoz Viñas, 2005, p. 67). Muñoz Viña (2005) puts forth that Boito believed the “target state of a conservation process should not be dictated by personal tastes (as with Ruskin’s appreciation of the romantic ruin) or by personal hypotheses over how a monument should have been (as with Violet-le-Duc), but rather objective, scientifically grounded facts” (p. 79).

The advent of a truth-based conservation theory and practice was founded in science and the principal of objectivity, meaning conservation must preserve the “true” nature of the object and an object’s true nature lies in the object’s material being (Muñoz Viñas, 2005, p. 90). The emphasis on science in the early stages of conservation was due to the protection of an object’s materiality. As Muñoz Viñas (2005) posits, knowledge and understanding of the physical world are paramount to the goals of science, which placed scientists within an important sphere of influence in the conservation practice (p. 70). Science understands the physical world through seemingly objective criteria, such as objects and facts, to reveal truth; objectivity is closely related to truth (p. 69). Scientific knowledge does not consider subjective meaning or knowledge related to the subject performing the enquiry, but rather to the object being preserved. Science cannot measure subjective meaning or create a framework for criteria based on knowledge that cannot be repeated (p. 87). Thus, a scientific form of conservation based on objectivity has evolved into the mainstream -- especially within the second half of the twentieth century — and has influenced preservation doctrine internationally and in the United States.

The Venice Charter is considered one of the most influential architectural conservation documents produced in the second half of the twentieth century. Stubbs (2009) put forth that the charter was the product of the largest gathering of restorers and architectural conservationists prior to 1964, with the implicit purpose of drafting a document with one of the main objectives being stated in Article 2 that “the conservation and restoration of monuments must have recourse

to all sciences and techniques which can contribute to the study and safeguarding of architectural heritage” (International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments, 1964, p. 137). Since its creation, the Venice Charter has served as the reference point for other major charters and standards in many parts of the globe (Stubbs, 2009, p. 138). As Salvador Muñoz Viñas posits, “appealing to ‘significance’ as a feature of conservation objects can be traced back to the Venice Charter” (Muñoz Vinas, 2005, p. 44). The Venice Charter reinforced significance as a rallying cry to conserve, restore, or add new to a monument or structure. Conservation doctrine in the second half of the twentieth century is therefore heavily influenced by the Venice Charter’s appeal to expert-derived historical significance, which was an important influence for the National Park Service’s Standards (Semes, 2009, p.169; Ahmad, 2006, p.293). In sum, preservation doctrine has relied on the context of existing historic material and scientific knowledge to reveal truth in history when preserving heritage.

#### **2.4.2 The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and assessing Significance**

The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation (1995) draws from the empirical-positivist approach to assessing significance and objective truth. As a result, the Standards are indicative of a conservation process that reinforces the expert-driven criteria of historical and architectural value. The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards 1 through 6 heavily emphasize a treatment framework based on expert-driven historic and architectural significance. For example, Standard 3 states that: “Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken” (National Park Service, 1995). Generally this Standard is interpreted by historical commissions as an addition that mimics the architecture of the original building. Steven Semes (2009)

acknowledges that many experts in the field of preservation oppose “literal replication” because the Venice Charter, which influenced the Standards, expresses that work must “bear a contemporary stamp”. Semes goes on to suggest that Standard 3’s interpretation of “what has come down to us in history” is a perpetual state of protecting what is deemed significant: “it is simply an attempt to place a moratorium on change and avoid the necessity of judging which aspects of that history are significant and which are not” (p. 183). This “historicist” narrative, according to Semes, “fails to recognize that architecture of any moment in history is driven by multiple impulses, even contradictory ones, that compete and combine in a continually jostling marketplace of works and ideas” (p. 148). In sum, the Standards “historicist” treatment of architecture restricts the evolutionary process of a site and limits the treatments available to a historical commission (p. 152).

In addition, the criteria of the Standards limit the ways experts assess architectural significance. Mason (2003) states that “many decisions about significance are made by experts, whose mindsets are often quite unreflective and uncritical”, meaning, expert judgements are based solely on a standardized criteria (pg. 64). Thomas King (2003) acknowledges that the objective criteria of significance may appear reasonable, for example, to experts unused to assessing significance through a subjective community lens, yet may simultaneously fail to reflect the true perspectives of that community (p. 16). Experts abiding by standardized criteria, such as Bulletin No. 24, will overlook important values a living community can communicate but may not fall within established standards of architectural history prescribed by the National Register criteria. The surveys that historical commission members or consultants must conduct as part of their duties are dictated by how significant a property is and how they interpret

significance, according to National Register criteria, affects what properties get nominated and ultimately how historical commissions value what and how to preserve.

Despite these limitations, preservation planning has evolved to be more inclusive in its conception of significance. Cloues and Lyon argue, “we recognize vernacular architecture, social history, cultural diversity, and intangible traditions and beliefs...the methodologies used to validate significance have expanded, and the constituency of users and affected groups has broadened” (ibid). Clouse and Lyon (1999) suggest that the preservation community now faces a new dimension where numerous viewpoints are converging within preservation and those opinions are being considered, increasing the variety of properties being brought under protection. “To be effective, we must achieve a consensus of preservation based on everyone’s ability to see and appreciate the richness of the historic resources that make up the mosaic of American communities” (ibid).

In the end, historical commissions abiding by the expert-driven standards limit the number of properties considered significant to a community. Placing emphasis on an expert-driven fabric based criteria of significance, as Dirk Spennemann (2006) explains, disregards that “values are mutable, and heritage places that may be evaluated as insignificant today may be regarded as significant tomorrow. It is assumed, without either justification or reflection, that sites that are already included on a register will remain significant” (p. 7). At different points in time, historic buildings and sites are valued in multiple ways. This view suggests that a historical commission’s traditional rationale for governing the development of local historic districts places limitations on what can be nominated. Unfortunately historical commissions have relied heavily on the Standards for guidance instead of utilizing the Standards as a foundation to a more nuanced community preservation planning tool. Hence, preservation doctrine, such as the

Standards, must evolve to consider the diversity of experiences in relation to how the community values heritage.

### **2.4.3 Blanket Preservation and the Secretary of Interior Standards**

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation guide historical commission design decisions based upon the premise of significance. As such, they were never intended to be the ubiquitous guidelines they are used as today. Drafted in 1977, the Standards were developed by National Park Service professionals to provide an academic understanding of preservation treatment issues and establish eligibility for compliance for rehabilitation projects seeking tax rebates (Semes, 2009, p. 137). Steven Semes (2009) maintains that "local preservation officials have tended to use the Standards to guide their own programs, lending the Standards a far broader authority than originally intended. Indeed, they have become the de facto national standards for preservation activity in the United States" (p. 137). There are many reasons why historical commissions rely on the Standards: adherence to federal legislation, requirements as part of state enabling legislation or local preservation ordinance, and lack of understanding of technical preservation issues by historical commission members.

While having standards is important in providing clear instruction, standards that do not require community input limit the flexibility in accommodating change in local community values. According to Mason (2003), guidelines based upon a fixed history "consider all the meanings of a place and winnow out the few most important ones" (p. 66). Lina Cofresi and Rosetta Radtke (2003) acknowledge that the Standards do not sufficiently emphasize the unique overall character that defines each local historic district (p. 132). Stipe (2003) agrees that it is inappropriate to use national guidelines and standards for local institutions (p. 485).

The criteria of the Secretary of the Interior Standards limit the type of local values expressed in the built heritage to be preserved. Guidelines, according to Rachel Cox (2002), should protect existing values effectively yet also allow the flexibility to accommodate changing needs and encourage creative solutions” (p.9). Stipe (2003) believes that historical commissions must proactively engage the larger environmental context, which is a central purpose of local regulation, in order to garner public input and adapt to larger environmental factors. (p. 485). Preservationists must explore new ways of integrating the values of others, especially non-preservation professionals, in order to receive the support of individuals affected by historic district regulation and to adapt to wider community conditions.

#### **2.4.4 The Ambiguity of Standard 9: Expert Interpretations and the Public Interest**

This thesis explores Standard 9, which guides historical commissions and design professionals in the creation of new construction in historic districts. Standard 9 states that “new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment” (National Park Service, 1995). It was greatly influenced by the Venice Charter’s article 9, which states:

It must stop at the point where conjecture begins, and in this case moreover any extra work which is indispensable must be distinct from the architectural composition and must bear a contemporary stamp. The restoration in any case must be preceded and followed by an archaeological and historical study of the monument (International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments, 1964).

Modernism’s design philosophy influenced the Venice Charter’s approach to new construction. Wells (2010) suggests that the Venice Charter “dealt with assuring the true authenticity of the past through the ethical principle of making sure all new construction is ‘of its time’ so that the

‘new’ can be clearly differentiated from the ‘old’ to avoid misleading a supposedly naive public” (p. 467).

Standard 9 has become controversial within the last twenty-five years because of the assertiveness of modernist design and the general shift of historical commissions in favor of strongly contrasting character and towards greater scrutiny of more traditional proposals (Semes, 2009, p. 32). More importantly, the Secretary of the Interior Standard 9 has produced inconsistent interpretations, leading to varying design principles being chosen by historic commissions (Semes, 2009). Due to its ambiguity, the Standards allow for both modern and historicized designs to be incorporated into historic districts (Skerry, 2012, p.85). The inconsistent interpretation of Standard 9 has much to do with the ideological dominance of modernist architecture during the formative years of preservation doctrine.

The Modernist dialectic controlled the architectural debate during the ascendancy of the scientific-curatorial approach to preservation practice, influencing the language of the Standards and, before that, the Venice Charter (Semes, 2009, p. 135). The Venice Charter came at a time when historic precedent would never inform contemporary practice, hence the charter’s emphasis on differentiation (p. 137). One of the core tenets of Modernism was the rejection of the past. The Modernist paradigm, Semes (2009) explains, believes the past is over and that new construction should be recognizable as different (p. 92). Modernist design philosophy is difficult to integrate into an environmental context that demands a composition of coherent ensembles that promote a continuity of architectural space and time, such as a historic district (Semes, 2009, p. 112).

Since the creation of the Venice Charter and the ascendancy of Modernist design theory, there has been a resurgence of traditional architectural practice that “seeks to heal that separation



between historical and contemporary design” (Semes, 2009, p. 137). No longer does differentiation mean Modern design, although preservation doctrine believes the professional must espouse truth within the built environment by showing differentiation. Preservation planning continually focuses on what the expert interprets as differentiated, but at the expense of the public, who has a vested interest in the design review process and whose important contribution most historical commissions generally exclude.

The public interest in design review comes from the constitutional police powers conferred by the state (Barnett, 2009, p. 225). Arthur Stamps (2000) acknowledges that “By definition the police power can only be used to promote the public welfare, so the taste constituency must be the public” (p.25). According to Reiko Habe (1989), traditional community input “is limited to attending public hearing[s] or selecting representatives for review board[s]”; very little active participation in preparing or monitoring guidelines is solicited from the general public (p. 215). Historical commissions do little to engage the public when formulating the regulatory framework of design review. Being proactive and understanding community needs would allow for stronger support of historic preservation initiatives.

The traditional approach to HDC regulation is overwhelmingly reactive (p. 215): “design review is a reaction to decisions already made...a variety of decisions that affect district appearance – including property maintenance and land use and tax policies – [which] may not come before the review board” (Bowsher, 1978, p.11). Mason (2006) acknowledges that:

Under the umbrella of traditional, static views of culture, preservation theory focused on how to approach and solve well-defined, technical and artistic problems such as anastylosis, the interpretation of monuments, and listing of individual buildings and districts. Against the backdrop of process-based views of culture, preservation theory has to re-examine some old questions and branch out to engage some different questions—especially those involving the political and economic aspects of preservation. p. 31)

A historical commission's traditional approach, reacting to an application, can clash with a community continually facing many different pressures. Ultimately, having a national treatment plan, guided by fixed notions of meaning, such as the Standards as a guide to community decision making, may conflict with changing community values. Historical commissions will need to incorporate non-expert community values into guidelines and revisit them often to adapt to changing cultural norms. Incorporating community values prior to the making of design guidelines could also create less hostility and ambiguity to inconsistent historical commission decisions in relation to new infill construction. In sum, the design review process is done in the interest of the public but rarely considers non-expert public values, outside of a reactive regulation process, when planning for the protection of historic resources. A values-centered approach to preservation would assess the values of all stakeholders involved, not only experts specializing in historic preservation. Non-expert values coupled with expert values can provide context for an acceptable design criteria that caters to the greater public interest and could potentially clarify the ambiguous expert interpretation of the Standard 9.

### **3.0 Values-centered planning**

In recent years, a values-centered paradigm shift has been occurring in preservation and changing the way preservation professionals approach preservation planning. This shift has implications for how Commissions treat the significance and materiality of a historic site. Salvador Muñoz Viñas (2005) states that: "The core notion behind values-led conservation is that conservation decision-making should be based on the analysis of the values an object possesses for different people in order to reach an equilibrium among all parties involved" (p. 178). A values-centered approach is based upon the idea that culture is a process. Mason (2006) states: "By centering a model of preservation on the perceived values of places, as opposed to the

observed qualities of fabric, values-centered preservation acknowledges the multiple, valid meanings of a particular place. It acknowledges their multiplicity, their changeability, and the fact that values come from many different sources” (p. 31). A values-centered approach to conservation planning would examine why the fabric is significant, and incorporate significance into the planning process of maintaining historic resources (ibid).

Values-based planning has stirred a debate as to whether fabric-based preservation can continue to flourish and play a more proactive role in dealing with larger societal issues (Stipe, 2003, p. 476). A site that is considered valuable at a specific moment in time may not hold the same value for the following generation. Martha Demas (2002) acknowledges that “Values are mutable; social and economic conditions change; values-based planning is capable of being manipulated, yielding a deeper, broader comprehension of what gives a site relevance – something a fabric-based approach could not accommodate” (p. 49). These competing methodologies are heavily influenced by the concept of significance, which raises the issue: How can current historical commissions, utilizing a traditional methodology, continue to understand the changing significance of historic resources? Australia’s Burra Charter exemplifies preservation planning that deemphasizes the importance of material truth and provides credence to a process viewed through the lens of culture.

### **3.1 The Burra Charter and Significance**

The Burra Charter is a seminal heritage conservation document that introduced a values-based approach to preservation. It was the first conservation document to pioneer the concept of cultural significance and its related subjectivity, along with a scientific approach (Wells, 2007, p. 10). The Australia ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) Burra Charter has been used by the Australian government, with advocacy from the Getty Conservation Institute, to

establish a planning process that evolves in response to experience and shifting cultural norms (Demas, 2002, p. 28). The Burra Charter emphasizes significance as key to the process of identifying the spectrum of meanings people have attributed to a site. Its approach stands in stark contrast to the Venice Charter and the National Park Service's expert-based interpretation of significance. John Stubbs (2009) states "The importance [the] Burra Charter places on the cultural significance of sites over aesthetic and material values reflects the fundamental difference in sensibilities between it and the [fabric-based] Venice Charter" (p.140). The Burra Charter allows custodians of places of cultural significance to balance tangible and intangible elements of significance. Kristin Hagar (2011) explains that the Burra Charter expands significance to not only encompass "aesthetic and/or historical values (the traditional foci of preservation), but also, more inclusively, for its social and spiritual values. The Burra Charter also emphasizes that these types of values are not mutually exclusive; a single site is likely to contain multiple values" (p. 27). Value-based planners analyze the various meanings of a site to inform a broad range of decisions about why and how to preserve and protect the site (Demas, 2002, p.34). The Burra Charter process states in Article 6 that:

- 6.1 The cultural significance of a place and other issues affecting its future are best understood by a sequence of collecting and analyzing information before making decisions. Understanding cultural significance comes first, then development of policy and finally management of the place in accordance with the policy.
- 6.2 The policy for managing a place must be based on an understanding of its cultural significance.
- 6.3 Policy development should also include consideration of other factors affecting the future of a place such as the owner's needs, resources, external constraints and its physical condition (Australia ICOMOS, 1999).

This approach promotes a conservation process that is capable of evolving within the cultural landscape. Article 15 of the Burra Charter further addresses change in relation to the conservation process:

15.1 Change may be necessary to retain cultural significance, but is undesirable where it reduces cultural significance. The amount of change to a place should be guided by the cultural significance of the place and its appropriate interpretation.

15.2 Changes which reduce cultural significance should be reversible, and be reversed when circumstances permit.

15.3 Demolition of significant fabric of a place is generally not acceptable. However, in some cases minor demolition may be appropriate as part of conservation. Removed significant fabric should be reinstated when circumstances permit.

15.4 The contributions of all aspects of cultural significance of a place should be respected. If a place includes fabric, uses, associations or meanings of different periods, or different aspects of cultural significance, emphasizing or interpreting one period or aspect at the expense of another can only be justified when what is left out, removed or diminished is of slight cultural significance and that which is emphasized or interpreted is of much greater cultural significance (Australia ICOMOS, 1999).

The Burra Charter has broadened the role of the preservationist. In fabric-based preservation consultation, the traditional team of experts based in archeology, architecture and history are required to assess the values of a site based on historic relevance and architectural importance. Values-based planning, in the other hand, has transformed the preservationist into a facilitator, performing planning activities such as community charettes and weighing the opinions of professionals in related fields. (Spennemann, 2006, p.11). Communication is essential to the Burra Charter's assessment of significance and by engaging multiple stakeholder viewpoints, a preservationist can derive deeper community meaning and context for design decisions.

### **3.1.1 Communicative Planning and Preservation's New Direction**

Contemporary planning practice within the "last third of the twentieth century" has begun to focus on more interactive forms of communication, such as focus and research groups, and community charettes to engage the public in the local planning process (Heywood, 2011, p. 30). Preservation planning has been reluctant to follow suit. Traditionally, expert-driven aesthetic and historic values have motivated preservation planning. Historical commissions rely on the expert created/interpreted criteria for nominations to local districts or to the National Register of

Historic Places, or to follow the Standards when reviewing changes to locally protected district fabric. Randall Mason (2006) mentions that other fields “such as city planning, environmental conservation, and public health, rise to the challenge of recognizing the diversity and even divergence of views about their core concerns” (p. 36). Engaging multivalent associative values that historic resources have for the community at large broadens the support for protecting resources and allows experts the opportunity to conduct a more pluralistic assessment of what resources need protection. Stephen Gordon (1999) proclaims, “Without local involvement and participation, historic preservation will ultimately fail in building a broad base of community support. Significant resources may still be identified and documented, but they will not be preserved” (p. 51). Phil Heywood (2011) observes that:

Countless examples of the political and administrative rewards of involvement and the penalties of social exclusion have given rise to flourishing consultation and facilitation activities throughout contemporary mass societies. Where the effects of time and distance inevitably exclude many people from direct involvement in decisions crucially affecting their daily lives, the opportunity to contribute and have publicly recorded information on values, preferences and facts can itself become a useful form of engagement. If the purpose and the use of outcomes are made clear and incorporated transparently into decision-making processes, consultation can become a useful tool of governance and planning.” (p.33)

In recent years, preservation planning has been beginning to adopt the communicative methods of contemporary planning. The American Planning Association (APA) Guide to Historic and Cultural resources (1997) suggests local governments “work with citizens and local interest groups to make preservation part of the overall effort to foster and promote the general welfare of the community (p.3). The APA also promotes the idea of a less static interpretation of history and to conserving the physical aspects of historic resources. The APA (1997) supports the interpretation of “history and cultural heritage in the most inclusive sense possible, reaching across barriers of race, ethnicity, religion, class, or income” (p. 3). In so doing, it “Seek[s] to

protect not only the resources itself, but its context in the larger community by ensuring that preservation of significant structures is not limited to preservation of a building's 'skin' without adequate consideration of its other component parts and history" (p. 3).

Preservation planning is beginning to look outward and see the importance of greater community involvement. The NPS has revised the Statement of Significance to incorporate a diverse range of community values, but has yet to create a process for assessing non-expert values in informing design guidelines within a local context. Jeremy Wells (2010) states that "Preservation professionals often already unofficially acknowledge how local populations value historic places. The next logical step is to officially recognize the values of these people in the preservation planning and management process" (p. 39). While not a panacea, communicative planning is a new direction for historical commissions to consider when assessing the value of historic resources, and ultimately will lead to design decisions that truly reflect the values of the local community.

#### **4.0 Conclusion:**

Significance, Mason (2003) acknowledges, is the reason for planning, policy and design decisions (p.64). Historical commissions value significance from an empirical standpoint, placing importance on the historical and architectural interpretations of a site. Yet, the technical interpretation of a site emphasizes professional judgement in the preservation planning process. David Lowenthal (2000) believes that a dilemma arises from this imbalance: He suggests that heritage stewardship "becomes an enterprise of technical expertise; the general public, devoid of professional competence, stands aside" (p.19). Likewise, the National Register criteria for significance influences how historic commissions value historic resources by grounding local resource surveys on a limited criteria for significance, which marginalizes a majority of voices

who experience and interpret historic resources. The upside of this situation is that it solidifies a distinctive narrative that is easy to define. The downside is that the preservation community discounts an inordinate amount of information that could be beneficial to managing its resources. Ultimately, preservation has evolved into a reactive activity achieved by a regulatory process devoid of public understanding or a larger community context. (Stipe, 2003; Cofresi & Radtke, 2003). Assessing non-expert values to diversify meanings should be a vital component of preservation planning.

A values-based planning process can provide preservationists with an open door to the community. Mason (2006) explains that “Values-centered preservation differs from traditional preservation practice [by] respond[ing] directly to the multivalent nature of heritage places and to the trenchant insight that culture is best understood as a process, not a set of things” (p.45). Culture is a process and it is constantly changing due to conflict and innovation. Placing a high priority on the mutability of values displaces the importance of technical pursuits, not as the end all of preservation but as a means to an end of preserving a site’s cultural significance (p. 45). Mason and Avrami (2000) believe we preserve because of the values we impart upon heritage. The material solely, without context, has no meaning (p. 25). Values-based planning, according to Martha Demas (2000), begins by delving into the aims and expectations of the preservation planning process, determining who should be involved, what is known about the site, and what needs to be understood (p.30). Salvador Muñoz Viñas (2005) believes that “Contemporary ethics asks [preservationists] to consider the different meanings that an object has for different groups of people, and to decide not just which meanings should prevail, but also how to combine them to satisfy as many views as possible” (p.214).



The greatest challenge of implementing values-based planning is understanding the subjective nature of these values and acknowledging that few absolutes exist in terms of right and wrong. As communities change, the interests of stakeholders will falter, and therefore the meaning of the site will also wane (Demas, 2002, p.49). This process presents considerable challenges for cash-strapped preservation programs or planning departments that may not have the resources to continuously adapt and reinterpret plans. Nonetheless, values-based planning provides an opportunity for preservation to branch off into a new direction.

Values-based planning processes have been slow to come online in the United States. Traditional preservation planning is still deeply embedded in how local historic commissions value historic resources. Although there exists enough scholarship on the importance of values-based planning, there are no tangible examples of conservation plans, let alone design guidelines, being derived from a values-basis in the United States. More recent literature on design review emphasizes the importance of community input, yet a majority of commissions still utilize a traditionally-based criteria for treatment of local resources. Design review guidelines are a piece of the process of preservation planning, but precisely how values-based planning can influence the creation of design guidelines remains to be answered.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODS**

This thesis looks to understand how non-expert stakeholders perceive professional/expert design decisions/criteria for new infill construction within historic settings and how their perceptions can be incorporated into the design review process. The issue pertains to the design decisions made by architects, preservationists, and design review historical commissions in relation to Standard 9 of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, and the ambiguous nature of this Standard's interpretation. The methodology of this research has much in common with Setha Low's study of local perceptions in Oley, Pennsylvania, which is based on "observations of people living in the community, rather than on the conceptual language of the professional or consultant" (p. 21). As Low posits, professionals learn to see their environment through established codes, symbols, and a common language; the public on the other hand do not share in this system of perception (Low, 1985, p. 4). As such, this method of research adds to the dialog between preservation professionals and the public and can lead to the development of appropriate design guidelines that cater to local context and engage the community in preservation planning. This chapter explores the methods used to gather data, and describes the setting, sample, participants, research design, data analyses and procedures.

This thesis used a qualitative research methodology. A qualitative methodology best accommodated how non-expert stakeholders experience and value the historic built environment. As Egon G. Guba and Yvonna S. Lincoln (1994) state, "Human behavior, unlike that of physical objects, cannot be understood without reference to the meanings and purposes attached by human actors to their activities. Qualitative data, it is asserted, can provide rich insight into human behavior" (p.106). Qualitative research can describe holistically how non-expert stakeholders perceive new infill construction in historic settings and provide empirical evidence

from the prospective of stakeholders on the issue of what is appropriate in regard to new construction in historic settings. It will also contribute to balancing expert values with non-expert stakeholder significance.

The methods I used to gather data include photo-elicitation accompanied by an interview. The photo elicitation and interview method determined how stakeholders perceive different design concepts that relate to new infill construction in a historic town setting. According to Douglas Harper (2002), “Photo elicitation is based on the simple idea of inserting a photograph into a research interview” (p.13). Because architecture is visual, photography is a medium that best describes the meaning a researcher and participant are trying to convey when studying the built environment. Pavlides and Cranz (2009) explain that “architecture photographs and drawings are not merely illustrations of ideas but an indispensable part of the discourse in the same way that visual information is essential to art history and archaeology” (p.198). Furthermore, images conjure deeper meaning than interviews with words alone (Harper, 2002, p.13). Bolton, Pole, and Mizen (2001) claim that “photographs carry a great deal of information, getting research participants to explain and elaborate that information is an opportunity to gain not just more but different insights into social phenomena, which research methods relying on oral, aural or written data cannot provide” (p.503). Ultimately, photo-elicitation provides information on how various groups of inhabitants interpret, view, and comprehend visual differences in their environments (Pavlides, 2013, p. 338).

Photographs were used to elicit dialogue about the design decisions that could be interpreted from the Town of Falmouth’s design review guidelines for new construction. I photographed the Hewins Street streetscape located on Falmouth’s Town Green and then, using Photoshop CC, I altered the photos by layering images of new construction that has been approved by the

Falmouth Historic Districts Commission for other sites in the district onto an empty space on Hewins Street. The examples were scaled to match the existing context and blended into the historic streetscape.

These photographs formed the basis of the interviews and helped elicit meanings and ideas about new infill construction from the non-expert informants. I then utilized a non-expert focus group to test whether the design typologies – scale, massing, materials, roof form, and fenestration – represented in the photographs were actually interpreted in the same way by non-experts. The non-expert focus group informants were given a rating sheet for each individual streetscape, and asked to rate the building based on the design criteria for new construction. The ratings were totaled and the buildings given a number that coincided with whether or not the design elements fit well into the streetscape. I selected the photographs with the best rating to present to the individual interview Informants.

After the focus group helped to inform the selection of the photographs, I was able to interview individual stakeholders. The interview questions were thematic and open ended, which helped to create an environment for the stakeholder to freely speak about the photo's architectural qualities. I asked a series of questions such as “How do you feel about the size of this building within the context of this streetscape?” The interview followed an unstructured process that adapted to the different meanings being elicited by the informant.

As Punch (2005) posits, the interview is an essential data collection tool utilized in qualitative research and is an important way to assess stakeholder “perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality” (p.168). Although the interview method is a crucial component of qualitative research, adding photographs to the process elicits different kinds of information. Gillian Rose (2012) argues that while “ordinary interview talk can explore

many issues, discussing a photograph or a drawing with an interviewee can prompt talk about different things, in different ways. Things are talked about in these sorts of interviews that don't get discussed in talk-only interviews" (p. 305). It has been theorized that while the brain is processing images as well as words, the subject is utilizing more of the brain's capacity to think, therefore producing more information and meaning from the informant for the researcher to analyze (Harper, 2002, p.13). In sum, photo elicitation and interviews were crucial to gathering non-expert stakeholder perception on new construction within a historic context.

### **3.1 Setting**

The interviews were conducted in Falmouth's Town Hall located at 59 Town Hall Square in Falmouth, Massachusetts. One interview occurred at the Coffee Obsession located at 110 Palmer Avenue, Falmouth.

### **3.2 Sample and Participants**

The sampling method used by the researcher was a purposive convenience sampling. According to Patton (1990), purposeful inquiry relies on in-depth small samples from which a researcher can glean a great deal of data about a particular issue (p.169). My unit of analysis is the non-expert values of community members who live in Falmouth. The participants are restricted to those who live in Falmouth and the participants' willingness to participate in the study.

### **3.3 Research Design**

#### **3.3.1 Focus Group**

My research began by holding a focus group composed of non-professional community members who have knowledge of town planning but not historic preservation. The purpose of this group was to assess the impact of the designs portrayed in the photographs. I needed to

understand if the concepts I was trying to communicate to community members, unfamiliar with expert lexicon and design practice, were successful in portraying the design typologies of scale, massing, materials, roof form, and fenestration. Focus groups, as Punch (2005) explains, help to produce information and perceptions that would otherwise not be exposed and can also elucidate or clarify views and data about a particular topic (pp.171, 172).

The participants were given a packet that explained the objective of the focus group. In each packet came a rating system, along with definitions, outlining the different design criteria the HDC looks at when approving new construction. Based upon the definitions, the group rated seven photo-shopped streetscapes. The rating system was structured around scale, massing, materials, roof form, and fenestration, which are the five separate criteria the HDC look at when reviewing new construction. Each participant rated each design concept for each individual photo from one to five, five being the best representation of that concept for the photo-shopped building within the Hewins Street streetscape.

Once the focus group had rated the photos, I asked them to discuss the architectural qualities of the photos. I recorded which photographs elicited the greatest conversation and clearly communicated the correct coded data assigned to each photograph. While the group reviewed the photos, I did not discuss my intent with each of the photographs in order to keep my bias from swaying the perception of the group. After the group concluded their conversation and selection, I was able to amend the group of photos to present to informants for the individual interviews.

### **3.3.2 Individual Interviews**

I solicited participants for the Individual Interviews through my work as Assistant Town Planner in Falmouth. I asked the potential informant in person if he or she was interested in

participating in the research. If he or she said yes, I then set up a time to interview the Informant at Town Hall. I interviewed Informants until I reached a data saturation point or when I began generating information from Informants that no longer revealed new themes substantial to understanding how the participant perceives the design criteria in the photographs. I followed the same approach when it came to the number of Informants I interviewed. When Informants began providing similar information to previous Informants, I was able to conclude that I had reached a data saturation point with the photo elicitation method and the interview process. I interviewed six (6) Informants and had five (5) focus group members. The interviews were recorded on the “Voice Memos” app on my iPhone 4S. I then transcribed the digital information and coded the Informant’s information to extract similar themes and meanings onto an Excel spreadsheet.

### **3.4 Data Collection/Procedure**

I presented Informants with photos that showed Hewins Street, located on the Town Green in Falmouth, with different HDC-approved new construction projects altered into the streetscape. I then asked the Informant a series of questions that addressed the design review criteria for new construction for each photo and how that project fit into Hewins Street. I then had the Informant further elaborate on why he or she believed a particular photograph was more appropriate than the other.

#### **Outline of research procedure:**

1. Solicit for participant.
2. Set up an interview in Falmouth Town Hall.
3. Meet and give the Informant the consent form to read, and explain the nature of the research and interview. Reiterate that the Informant may stop the interview at any time if they become uncomfortable or uninterested in participating, and can freely leave without any repercussions.
4. Turn on recording device.
5. Begin interview by showing photos to Informant. After the Informant has viewed the photos, ask the Informant a series of questions based on the design review criteria for

new construction. Then ask the Informant which project was more appropriate for Hewins Street.

6. After the Informant has answered, ask them why they feel that photo is appropriate. Allow the Informant to take as long as they need to fully explain their answer. When the Informant has fully explained their answer and is comfortable with the information they have provided, end the interview.
7. Shut off the recording device and thank them for their time and input.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

I analyzed the respondent's interview and photographic selection by coding their responses. Coding allowed me to organize the interview data into coherent concepts. Coding "moves data from diffuse and messy texts to organized ideas about what is going on...coding may take one of several forms: descriptive coding to identify information according to topics, analytic coding to facilitate interpretation, or coding to identify themes" (Richards & Morse, 2007, p.150). I then developed themes from respondent data that fit into the design concepts shown in the photographs. I used Loeffler's (2004) process, which suggests that "interview transcripts [be] read repeatedly until categories beg[i]n to emerge from the data" (p.542). The data was grouped to show common typologies and similarities, in this case Informant data with design review typologies, historicized with differentiated design.

Coding to link data and ideas is a form of abstraction. Abstract thinking will transform the respondents' data into recognizable concepts, which are drawn from respondent's phrases and words. As Punch (2005) suggests, abstract theory grounded in the data will reveal concepts that are not obvious in the data. Concepts "need to be inferred from the data by induction. This inductive inference is the process of abstraction" (p. 213). Abstraction explores data from informant interviews by creating generalized categories that develop concepts that help the researcher understand and build theories (Richards & Morse, 2007, p.153). I then categorized the themes utilizing a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to expedite organizing the coded information.



The generalized themes identified patterns that related to the design typologies, coded to the photographs, and helped to answer my research question.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

This qualitative research method provided data on how non-expert stakeholders perceive and interpret expert design decisions for new infill projects in historic town settings. It also yielded information on and whether or not photo elicitation and interviews can tap into non-expert values to potentially inform the process of creating design guidelines. The photo elicitation method and open ended interviews helped to shed light on how non-experts perceive the historic built environment, laying a foundation for developing a more engaging and participatory preservation planning process. With the information generated, the researcher was able to analyze the data to arrive at a more definitive understanding of Falmouth residents' perception of new infill construction and conclusively answer my research question. Ultimately, this new way of engaging the community brings preservation experts closer to the people they serve and balances expert interpretations with non-expert stakeholder perceptions.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESULTS**

The focus group and the six individual interviews provided the researcher with insight into how the community perceived the design guidelines the Falmouth Historic District Commission follow when considering proposed new construction in the town's regulated local historic districts. The five member focus group helped me verify the design typologies, scale, massing, materials, roof form, and fenestration, in order to understand if the design phenomena that the researcher believed was in the photographs was actually represented and interpreted in the same way by the focus group. The interview questions were thematic, based on the design rationale of the Falmouth Historic Districts Commission, and open ended, which helped to create an environment for the stakeholder to freely speak about the photo's architectural qualities. The interview followed a set of structured but open-ended questions that helped to get the participant thinking about the six design concepts. The researcher asked initial questions, such as "How do you feel about the size of this building within the context of this streetscape?", and "What do you think about the shape of the building in relation to the shapes of the surrounding buildings?" The participants were encouraged to speak further about architectural details unrelated to the question that they felt were relevant to interpreting the photograph. Overall, the focus group and interviews allowed the researcher to gather relevant information that reinforced the general goal, which is new design that is compatible with surrounding buildings.

### **4.1 Focus Group**

The Local Comprehensive Planning Committee (LCP) enthusiastically volunteered to be my focus group. The LCP is a subcommittee of the local Planning Board tasked with the mission of updating the local comprehensive plan. The plan guides the town's growth, development, civic improvement, and resource conservation, to name a few things. The LCP is broken up into

specific elements that address topics and issues for which the town plans, for example, the transportation element and the land use element. The LCP was fortuitously involved in the Historic Character element when the opportunity to use them as focus group arose. The committee is composed of the three planning board members, a member of the public, and various community stakeholders. The five focus group members came from various professional backgrounds that included engineering, real estate, education, computer programming and historic preservation, and planning academia. The focus group was advertised as all other LCP meetings are – 48 hours in advance of the meeting and posted in Town Hall.

The participants were given a packet (See Appendix E) ahead of the planned meeting that explained the objective of the focus group. Each packet contained a rating system outlining the definitions of different design criteria the HDC looks at when approving new construction. Based upon the definitions, the group rated seven (7) streetscapes altered to demonstrate certain design principles (See Appendix C). The rating system was structured around the five (5) separate criteria the HDC looks at when reviewing new construction: scale, massing, materials, roof form, and fenestration. Each participant rated each design concept, for each individual photo, from one (1) to five (5) – five (5) being the best representation of that concept for the altered buildings within the Hewins Street streetscape.

The rating system was a way to see if the design criteria represented in the photos could be interpreted by the focus group; it also kept the group discussion focused, since we had a limited amount of time (1 hour). The rating system also allowed the researcher to see which properties the focus group thought fit better into the Hewins Street streetscape and whether there was consensus amongst the group.

#### **4.1.1 Focus Group Rating Result**

The focus group was presented with seven photos of Hewins Street on the Town Green. Each photo had a different construction project, previously approved by the Falmouth HDC, altered into the center building of the streetscape. The focus group was asked to rate the scale, massing, materials, roof form, and fenestration of the newly inserted building, and how the overall buildings and their design details fit into the Hewins Street streetscape. From this rating, the researcher tallied the top five properties the focus group believed best fit into Hewins Street. The five examples are the photos the researcher used for the individual interviews.

The final rating total for the focus group's top five photos is as follows: 1. Hewins and 51 Main Street 2. Hewins and 137 Shore Street 3. Hewins and 141 Locust Street 4. Hewins and 597 West Falmouth Highway, and 5. Hewins and 8 Chancery Lane (see Appendix D). The focus group participants, with one exception, consistently chose 51 Main Street as the best representation of new construction on Hewins street. The property, 51 Main Street, was approved by the Historic Districts Commission in 1994, and is the newest building constructed on the Town Green. The building is located southeast of the Hewins Street streetscape.

Aside from one member of the focus group, the participants were unaware 51 Main Street was located on the Town Green, despite the participants living in Falmouth. This consensus was an affirmation of the decision by the HDC to approve the construction of this property on the Town Green. But more importantly, the design criteria that the researcher was looking to represent to non-professional historic preservation stakeholders in the photos was also confirmed.

## 4.2 Exploring the Design Criteria through individual interviews

I was able to set up a series of interviews with residents of Falmouth who were not professionals in the field of historic preservation or have a background or degree in architecture or design. There were six participants, 4 women and 2 men, all participants were Caucasian. The age of the women were as follows: Informant 1, 36 years old; Informant 3, 56 years old, Informant 5, 67 years old, and Informant 6, 34 years old. The two men, Informants 2 and 4, were ages 58 and 62 respectively. All of the interviews took place in Falmouth's Town Hall, except for one interview, which took place at a local coffee shop called the Coffee Obsession. The participants were shown 1 of the 5 images and asked a series of open ended questions that pertained to Falmouth HDC design criteria. This was repeated for each photo. The interviews generally lasted from 25 to 30 minutes. The open ended questions asked were as follows:

1. How do you feel about the size of this building in relation to the surrounding streetscape?
2. What do you think about the shape(s) of the building in relation to the surrounding buildings?
3. How do you feel about the materiality of the building as it relates to the surrounding streetscape, specifically the siding, trim, and roofing materials?
4. How do you feel about the roof form fitting in with its surroundings?
5. What do you think about the window placement and it corresponding with the surrounding buildings?

All participants were able to verbalize their thoughts as it related to the design criteria, and their answers were coded to fit into the design review criteria.

## 4.2.1 Interpreting design criteria through individual photo elicitation interviews

### 4.2.1.1 Hewins Street and 137 Shore Street



*Figure 4.1: Hewins Street and 137 Shore Street*

The design for 137 Shore Street is contemporary. It was built in 2013 and has no grounding in a particular architectural style found on the Town Green. Most architecture on the Green is from the late eighteenth century to the late nineteenth century. The façade has two paired asymmetrical gable pediments. The smaller gable pediment tops a projecting mass that comes off the main rectangular shape of the building.

This project comes from the Shore Street extension of the Falmouth Village Historic District. Most houses in this district have a similar design aesthetic: a one-and-half story traditional Cape Cod-style home built in the 1950s with some mid to late nineteenth-century houses mixed in. The lots are larger and less dense than the lots found on the village green.

#### 4.2.1.2 Scale

Of the six interview Informants, five found the scale of the building not appropriate for new construction within the Hewins Street streetscape. The Informant 3 found the scale appropriate, believed the “size was doable”, but then later stated the house “looks out of place”. Informant 1 stated that the property is “a little small”; while Informant 2 said it “looks lost”.

Informant 6 alluded to the size of the house not filling in the lot as well as the surrounding buildings. She stated, “the size is too small”; there is “too much gap between the houses”.

Informant 1 referred to the scale of 137 Shore as “not as grandiose as the other ones”. “The other houses look like plantation houses, and 137 looks like a farm house.” When pressed to elaborate more as to why the scale is off, the Informant said “if it were a bit grander, with columns and a little more detail” it would fit in better. Informant 2 said something similar, stating “the house has been outclassed”, referring to the wealth and status afforded those that originally lived on the green, and how the size and detailing just don’t allow 137 Shore Street to fit in. Overall, the Informant interviews showed that the size of 137 Shore Street was inappropriate for new construction on Hewins Street.

#### **4.2.1.3 Massing**

Massing was a design detail the Informants felt also didn’t fit well into the streetscape for 137 Shore Street. Informant 6 accurately described a massing detail found on the façade and pointed out “It would fit in better if it didn’t have this rectangular bump out. It would fit in better if it were flat faced like the others.” The surrounding buildings do not have any extra massing or shape added to the front façade or the building’s main shape. Two informants made similar observations pertaining to the massing and its lack of detail. Informant 2 stated “The shape design doesn’t blend in at all or have any elegant trim”, while Informant 4 said “its square, it’s a little bland.” Informant 3 and 5 alluded to the incompatibility of the rectangular massing coming from the front façade without actually pointing it out. Informant 3 said “the doorway is the focal point and it is hiding.” Informant 5 said the shape didn’t fit in well because of the “recessed door...” The massing overpowers the front entry and makes it secondary, “almost like

another window.” Because of this, Informant 2 felt that the “porch doesn’t look functional.” Overall, the Informants felt the massing of this property didn’t fit well in the streetscape.

#### **4.2.1.4 Materials**

The Informants felt the materials used to finish 137 Shore Street were incompatible with the surrounding streetscape. The lack of shutters on the property was a main concern of the interviewees. Both properties flanking the altered building have shutters. Informant 1 immediately pointed out that it “doesn’t have shutters”. Informant 3 also mentioned “It’s almost like you want something with shutters on the façade.” Informant 4 said “the shutters would make a big difference, something around the windows. That would make it fit in more.” Shutters were also on the mind of Informant 5 when she said, “It looks like it should have shutters. Houses of that period had shutters on them. The fact that it doesn’t, doesn’t make it fit in.” And Informant 6 stated that “The lack of shutters seems to take it out of the period. Shutters would make it nicer.”

Other issues the group touched on pertaining to materials included the lack of architectural detail. Informant 2 said the materials “Look too stark. Nothing fancy, no defining or distinctive features. Bare bones for what it is competing with.” As mentioned above, Informant 2 felt it could use more “elegant trim.” Informant 1 didn’t like the unfinished shingles and felt that it “should be painted.” She also felt it needed columns. Informant 3 also said the materials don’t look “historical, it looks contemporary, almost vinyl sided.” Informant 4 further elaborated by saying that “a fence or bushes in the front would make it more inviting.” The overall materiality of 137 Shore Street, according to the Informants, could have been improved with shutters and paint.



#### **4.2.1.5 Roof Form**

The Informants had more of a mixed reaction to the roof form and how it fit into the Hewins Street landscape. Informant 1 felt the roof matched the streetscape, and “wouldn’t affect how I thought of the house fitting in.” Informant 2 thought the gable form is a “traditional look.” “The angles here are beneficial, gives it depth and personality.” Informant 3 said the gables add a symmetry and a “repetition” but it is more contemporary” than the surrounding properties. Informant 5 found the “double gables look very modern and doesn’t look like what is going on in the other two houses. It just seems like it doesn’t fit. The gables destroy the line of it (streetscape).” Finally, Informant 6 felt the double gable made the roof look “awkward” in comparison to the rest of the streetscape.

#### **4.2.1.6 Fenestration**

When asked about the placement of the windows, most felt the fenestration pattern didn’t fit in well with the streetscape. Informant 1 felt the window placement “fits and belongs. There is a symmetry.” But, Informant 3 had a different perspective, stating the “windows are not perfectly underneath. The size of the windows are small and energy efficient. Windows are smaller and not as open, and not as welcoming. You can picture yourself walking into these (surrounding) homes and there being a lot of light.” Informant 5 felt “there are too many for the size of the house.” Informant 6 felt the windows were too far apart, stating “The way it (the windows) is structured, it doesn’t have the symmetry the others (houses) have. Windows seem too far apart but that could be because of the lack of shutters.” The Informants also picked up on the lack of shutters. Informant 1 felt the window placement fit in but “if they had shutters it would totally look different and fit in better.” Informant 3 felt the fenestration was bare, stating “it’s almost like she has a blank face. The surrounding buildings have oodles of personality. It’s almost like

you want something with shutters on the façade.” From the interviews there is a sense that the property does not fit in well with the streetscape.

#### **4.2.1.7 Hewins Street and 141 Locust Street**



*Figure 4.2: Hewins Street and 141 Locust Street*

The design of 141 Locust is contemporary with a more compatible scale and massing than 137 Shore Street. It does lack symmetrical window placement and size, along with an off-center open portico. The chimney is also off center; there is little trim detail and it is covered in the ubiquitous cedar shingle found throughout Cape Cod. 141 Locust Street is situated in the Falmouth Village Historic District in a section where the lots are bigger and less dense than Hewins Street.

#### **4.2.1.8 Scale**

The individual interviews showed that the Informants thought the scale of 141 Locust Street was appropriate for new construction on Hewins Street. One Informant never got around to answering the question of scale, but focused on the materials and lack of shutters present on the façade. The five other Informants felt the size of the structure was “pretty good”, or that it “could work, it is conceivable the house could have been there”. Two Informants compared it to 137 Shore Street, one stating that “the size is better and about the same as the others.” While the

other informant said “it kind of goes better with the two on either side.” One informant felt the “size of it is symmetrical with the size of that (other houses next door)”. In sum, the Informants felt the scale of 141 Locust was suitable for new construction on Hewins Street.

#### **4.2.1.9 Massing**

Overall the Informants varied on the compatibility of the massing at 141 Locust Street to the Hewins Street streetscape. Informant 1 thought the “boxy shape matches but doesn’t have any additions.” Informant 6 also continued the boxy theme stating “It’s boxier and simpler, which seems to fit better with this period a little more.” Informant 3 felt that the “shape seems like it follows the pattern a little better. A little more flow to the street.” A few Informants did not directly elaborate on the issue of massing but instead focused on the property’s lack of detail. Informant 5 said the “Shape is not ornate enough, there is not enough detailing on it.” Informant 2 described the massing as “modest” and “does not continue the feel of the grand elegant houses on both sides.”

#### **4.2.1.10 Materials**

The materiality of 141 Locust Street was an issue for Informants that negatively affected the compatibility with the streetscape of Hewins Street.” Once again, the idea of shutters resurfaced. Informant 4 felt that for 141 to fit in “visually, the shutters would make a difference. Shutters and a different roof color.” Informant 1 felt that the “shingles don’t match and not having any shutters is a big deal.” For the informants, the natural weathered finish of the shingles made it hard for 141 Locust to blend into the streetscape. Informant 2 felt the materials made it look like a “weathered, older-looking style house.” It had a “rustic primitive style and the surroundings are much more elegant.” Informant 3 also perceived a rustic feel to 141 Locust Street, stating “It looks like it belongs on a dirt road with a farm surrounding it, it doesn’t go on

Main Street.” Informant 5 even mentioned the rural feel saying it “looks like it belongs in a rural setting.” 141 fitting in translated into a paint finish for Informant 5: “I would be looking for not weathered shingles, something that could take paint...” “The color siding should be white or yellow.” Informant 6 also picked up on this theme saying, “The weathered shingle look doesn’t look like it fits in.” She continues, recommending a siding choice: “I think it would be better if it were clapboard”. She also had issue with the color stating, “The color is a bit dark”, suggesting a lighter colored material or paint color. Informant 4 also thought “a clapboard front with paint would add to the alignment of the street”.

#### **4.2.1.11 Roof Form**

The roof form for 141 Locust did not inspire much praise from the Informants. Overall, the Informants felt the roof was not detailed enough. Informant 6 saw detail on the surrounding roofs but none on 141 Locust. She felt the roof form was “too plain.” This observation was also reinforced by Informant 4. He stated that the “roof is plain. The color sticks out. It has no lines.” Informant 3 also felt the same. The roof needs more texture, it is so blank to me. It blends into the house, it doesn’t define it.” Informant 1 provided some detail as to what would make the roof fit in better. She wished “there were a little peak or something that made it a little interesting.” The surrounding properties have interesting roof detail, 40 Main Street has a centered cupola and 20 Hewins has a pediment that is center on the façade, creating a more varied roof form.

#### **4.2.1.12 Fenestration**

The Informants’ perception of the compatibility of the placement of the windows at 141 Locust with those at 40 Main and 20 Hewins Street were mixed. Informant 6 felt the fenestration was off, stating the “door was off center” and “the window sizes and no shutters add to it.” She continued saying that the “windows on these houses (40 Main and 20 Hewins) are all the same

size and these windows are not (141 Locust)”. Informant 3 felt that the window placement was “not balanced, 4 over here and 2 over here. It’s awkward.” Informant 2 felt there was “symmetry to the windows”. Informant 1 felt that the windows were fine and that they needed shutters. She went on to state that the windows don’t “need to be symmetrical, I just think it needs to match the detail around it. Shutters would make a huge difference in general.”

Overall, the scale worked for the group. Massing didn’t elicit much meaning from Informants, but the materiality, roof form, and fenestration provided the most insight as to why 141 Locust was not appropriate for new construction.

#### **4.2.1.13 Hewins Street and 51 Main Street**



*Figure 4.3: Hewins Street and 51 Main Street*

The design of 51 Main Street is a contemporary take on the Georgian architectural style. The hipped roof and center chimney play to the more common architectural details of the style. The classical symmetry of Georgian architecture is not on display in the fenestration pattern. The first floor has paired windows, while the second floor has singular windows centered over the paired first floor windows. The clapboard siding is indicative of this period of architecture, while the trim detailing around the windows and front entry portico is based more in a contemporary style. The HDC approved 51 Main Street in 1994 and it resides on the Town

Green, a detail the Informants were not aware of. The Lots on the Main Street side of the Town Green are larger than Hewins Street lots.

#### **4.2.1.14 Scale**

The scale of 51 Main Street was not an issue for the interviewees. Informant 1 felt the size of the building was “great” in relation to the streetscape. When asked to further elaborate she could not really say more than it “just fits in”. Informant 5 said “The size is getting better, in my view, because the house needs to be large in order to live up to its position on that town square, it’s got to be a large home. So it’s getting there”. When asked about its compatibility with the scale of Hewins Street. Informant 6 said the scale “is getting more appropriate”. Informant 2 said it’s “a little bit smaller than the houses around it but it is not inconceivable that it is the original house”. Informant 4 stated, “It would fit in better with shutters”. The scale of 51 Main Street was not much of an issue for the Informants.

#### **4.2.1.15 Massing**

Informant 2 felt the massing was “a little bit on the small side. Additions on the side takes away the boxiness (sic) of the house, gives it greater mass”. Informant 4 said “the shape obviously makes it fit in more with the others”. Informant 5 said, “I think the additional bump out on the back helps visually to do that” when asked about the size of the house and what makes it fit in better. Informant 6 also felt the “addition on the side helps the size” fit in better “but also makes it look more modern”. The Informants felt the scale was getting more appropriate and the addition to the main massing of the house was improving the structure’s overall compatibility to the streetscape.

#### **4.2.1.16 Materials**

Informant 4 felt the materials on 51 Main Street are “welcoming...your eyes are drawn into the (front) doorway...the fence helps that”. “The porch over the door is also welcoming”. “It has a visual appeal. Your eyes just don’t want to fix it...” “I like the fence. It doesn’t have shutters, it’s a little more blanker [sic], it needs shutters to pop it”. Informant 1 liked that it was painted but also pointed out there were no shutters “but because it matches” to the streetscape “in so many ways, it doesn’t stand out as much”. She felt columns really helped it blend in to the streetscape. Informant 4 and 5 also came back to the missing shutters. Informant 4 suggested that the material would be better and the house “fit in better with shutters”. And informant 5 recommended putting shutters on it to help with compatibility. Finally, Informant 2 felt the “trim and design of the trim is appropriate”, and also the “fence helps out”.

#### **4.2.1.17 Roof Form**

Informant 1 felt the “triangular” roof was an “important characteristic” by itself, even “though it doesn’t have any embellishments”. She felt the “chimney has a lot to do with the character – it wouldn’t look as interesting.” Informant 2 felt the roof form was compatible with the streetscape and also thought the “chimney really adds to it”. Informant 3 liked the “hipped roof, it’s kind of an old fashioned roof...the chimney is right there in the center.” Informant 4 thought the “hipped roof” helped it fit in better along with the “darker roof color”, referring to the lighter roof color of 141 Locust Street. Informant 5 believed the “roof looks very attractive” because “it has a center chimney. It needs the chimney!” Informant 6 was the only interviewee who felt the roof form didn’t fit into the streetscape. She believed the “Chimney makes it feel different.” “It doesn’t fit in, the others (40 Main and 20 Hewins) have a different form and this

one comes to a point.” She was referencing the gable roof forms of the surrounding properties which have their ridge lines running parallel to Hewins Street.

#### **4.2.1.18 Fenestration**

Informant 1 felt the placement of the windows worked well and went on to comment, “In general unless it is something really odd, windows don’t really stand out to me, except for if they need shutters”. She had mentioned earlier that 51 Main works so well in this streetscape that shutters are not really needed to help it blend in. Informant 2 felt the windows looked “small” and the “second floor window placement is unbalanced” but overall wasn’t too distracting. Informant 3 also stated, “the second floor is a little off from the first” but it is balanced. Informant 4 felt the window trim detail gave “it more of a historic touch”. Informant 5 thought the “windows make sense” and went on to say there was “attractive detailing to the entry way...the portico is nice”. Informant 6 felt the placement was off because “the windows don’t have shutters” but felt the “door is more in line (with the streetscape) and has more decoration”. Overall it is hard to gauge how they viewed the fenestration pattern, but if the windows had shutters, the fenestration probably would have had overwhelming support.



#### 4.2.1.19 Hewins Street and 597 West Falmouth Highway



*Figure 4.4: Hewins Street and 597 West Falmouth Highway*

597 West Falmouth Highway's architectural style borrows some of its detailing from the Shingle Style of architecture, which was prevalent in the late nineteenth century. The large gable and the three-part casement window, along with the shingle siding, all lend itself to this particular architectural style. Shingle Style architecture is commonly found in Falmouth and on large estates along the water, but has been borrowed heavily from for the new construction of single-family residences and condominium projects. 597 West Falmouth Highway is a condominium project approved by the HDC in 2012, and is in an area of town with larger lot sizes and less building density.

#### 4.2.1.20 Scale

Informants felt the scale of 597 West Falmouth Highway was not an appropriate fit. Informant 1 felt 597 West Falmouth was not a good fit size wise for Hewins Street. She stated that "It's a little small. The other two (40 Main and 20 Hewins) are two stories. It is not as grand." Informant 2 felt the same way about the scale of 597 West Falmouth, stating it's "not a

grand house”, then recommending “it needs a second level” to better fit in. Informant 3 followed the same line of thought saying, “she’s a little off in the height of her. You notice the skyline a little more”. Informant 3 continues by saying that the size “creates a space where there shouldn’t be, it should be filled in more”, touching upon an issue concerning the building’s massing. Informant 4 also had an issue with the height but felt the width of the structure was good. Informant 5 said “it’s not tall enough” when asked about the size of the building, and Informant 6 felt it “looks too low, it’s too short”. In sum, the one-and-a-half story height of 597 West Falmouth Highway was incompatible for Hewins, potentially a second story would have been more favorable for the Informants.

#### **4.2.1.21 Massing**

The Informants felt the massing of 597 West Falmouth Highway was not compatible with the Hewins Street section of the Town Green. When asked how she felt about the shape of 597 West Falmouth Highway in relation to the surrounding streetscape, Informant 1 stated “It’s not like a box, like the other ones”, comparing the shape to the rectangular massing of 40 Main and 20 Hewins, “it just doesn’t match.” Informant 2 also felt that the “shape is odd for the setting...far too angular”, referring to the large fronting gable. He did feel the width of the house “fills the space better.” Informant 4 also pointed out that the “width is fine”. Informants 3 and 5 identified the shape as contemporary, Informant 3 stating, “it’s too contemporary and too low” and Informant 5 saying “the shape is too contemporary...the single front gable adds to the contemporary feeling”. Informant 6 also stated that 597 West Falmouth “looks really modern, doesn’t fit on the Town Green”. When asked about how she felt about the shape of 597 in relation to Hewins Street, Informant 6 said “it’s not rectangular and doesn’t have the same feeling as the other two”. Informant responses show an aversion to the massing of 597 West

Falmouth Highway as it relates to the Hewins Street streetscape and reveal a leaning towards a rectangular two story massing that is more in keeping with the streetscape.

#### **4.2.1.22 Materials**

Informants didn't feel that the choice of materials at 597 West Falmouth Highway worked within this streetscape. Informant 1 felt the shingles were appropriate but expressed that "it needs to be painted if it is going to be in this area." And for the first time, an interviewee stated that shutters would "look weird" on 597 West Falmouth Highway. Informant 2 picked up on this by stating "shutters and trim would be inappropriate". Informant 3 pointed out the design's reference to the Shingle Style, and that the others had clapboard. She stated the materials "look too new, very clean, but doesn't have the character of the other two homes", even further suggesting it reminded her of a "condominium style", which is the current use of this property. Informant 4 had no direct aversion to the materials fitting in but, unlike Informants 1 and 2, recommended shutters to "help it out". Informant 5 did offer up an alternate material suggestion, stating "If I had a house on the green I would put clapboards on it". She felt that "the neutral shading of the shingles is too contemporary". The shingles have a bleached finish. Informant 6 also suggested "it would fit in better with clapboards". The Informants' responses suggest that 597 West Falmouth Highway would fit in better if the siding was a painted clapboard.

#### **4.2.1.23 Roof Form**

The Interviewees also felt the roof form of 597 West Falmouth Highway was not an appropriate roof form for Hewins Street. Informant 1 felt the "roof does not fit in. It is totally different with this big front thing (gable) in your face". Informant 2 was a bit more optimistic, stating it "needs a second level and the gable would not be as noticeable" and "the front gable

should be minimized (sic.)” if it were to fit on the Town Green. Informant 3 also felt the roof form didn’t fit in because it “doesn’t have that continuing flow to it”, in reference to the parallel horizontal flow of the surrounding ridgelines. Informant 4 thought the roof was “different, more contemporary”, looking to the other two but not incompatible. Informant 6 also equated the front facing as contemporary, stating “the single front gable adds to the contemporary feeling”, but didn’t feel it fit in. Informant 6 didn’t like “the large prominent triangular look” and that the “high pitched roof is sitting differently than the rest of the houses”. She continued by stating, “it doesn’t have simple style that you would find on the Town Green”. Overall, the Informants felt the roof form for 597 West Falmouth Highway was not compatible with Hewins Street.

#### **4.2.1.24 Fenestration**

The fenestration pattern of 597 West Falmouth was another design element the Informants felt didn’t fit well on the Town Green. Informant 1 felt the “windows are like what a kid would draw, it’s kind of funky.” She further elaborated that the “windows are just not structured enough for the area...not symmetrical”. Informant 2 felt the “windows fit in with the structure but the structure doesn’t fit in with the street.” He went on to say that “window placement is not as important in the overall look of the street.” Informant 3 felt the placement of the windows “are not uniform like the other two are...it’s just not a match for the other two, it’s just way too contemporary for me.” Informant 5 felt the window placement didn’t match and stated “you just can’t fool people by just putting grid work in the windows”, suggesting that putting a specific sash pattern in a building doesn’t make it compatible. Informant 6 nicely summarizes its fenestration pattern by saying “there is no symmetry to the windows, there is a big window here and a small window there – it just seems scattered. The others have a rhyme and

reason to the placement and the size.” In sum, the Informants felt that the fenestration pattern of 597 West Falmouth Highway is not compatible with 40 Main Street and 20 Hewins.

#### **4.2.1.25 Hewins Street and 8 Chancery Lane**



*Figure 4.5: Hewins Street and 8 Chancery Lane.*

The design of 8 Chancery Lane borrows elements of the Greek revival architectural style. The front gable and the tympanum are two Greek revival details that immediately stand out. The symmetry of Greek revival architecture is shown in the fenestration pattern. The windows are a six-over-six pattern that was common during that time period. The clapboard siding is also indicative of this period of architecture, while the trim detailing around the windows and front entry portico is based more in a contemporary style. This property was built in 2006 in the Falmouth Village Historic District, a densely packed area with very small lot sizes.

#### **4.2.1.26 Scale**

The Informants felt the scale of 8 Chancery Lane was too small to fit into the streetscape of Hewins Street. Informant 1 felt the height was good but the width was not enough to be compatible. Informant 2's reaction coincided with Informant 1's, stating, "It's much too small, it doesn't fit into the environment." He proclaimed that "It is so out of whack with the scale of the buildings around it that there is a disharmony. Throws the whole harmony and balance off of the whole street". He also added the "size and shape are very important...to a streetscape and this is

how I always look at this – how does this fit into the big picture – not just the house itself, but the environment that it is living in...this is a neighborhood of grand houses”. Informant 3 also observed that it is “way too narrow” as new infill construction. Informant 4 said the “size throws everything off.” And Informant 5 said “It’s too narrow. It just looks too tiny.” Informant 6 reiterated the above sentiment by saying, “It’s too skinny, it’s way too narrow.” According to the Informants, the size of 8 Chancery Lane is much too small for new infill construction on Hewins Street.

#### **4.2.1.27 Massing**

Massing, much like scale, did not win over most of the Informants. Informant 1 felt the shape of the structure’s massing was good. Informant 2 felt the “shape of the building is too square and boxy looking.” “To be appropriate it would have needed some wings to fill in the mass and eliminate that boxiness. (sic)” Informant 3, when asked about the shape of the building, felt the “narrowness of the home just doesn’t fit in”. Informant 4 said the “width and height is not proportional”. Informant 5 felt similarly stating, “it’s too narrow”. Informant 6 felt that if it had “the same girth as the others it would fit in.” The massing of 8 Chancery Lane did not work for the informants, suggesting additional massing proportional to the surrounding streetscape would be more appropriate.

#### **4.2.1.28 Materials**

The material, unlike the scale and massing for 8 Chancery, was acceptable to the Informants. Informant 1 liked the clapboard siding material and the fact that it was painted. She felt the “front portico is good” and “if the columns were a little pronounced” it would fit in better. But overall, the materials “match with the area”. Informant 2 felt the “materials and trim look appropriate for the setting that it is in. Nothing incongruous about the material at all.”

Informant 4 felt “the entrance needed a little more detail added to it.” Informant 5 liked the siding, stating “the clapboards work.” She felt that the structure “looks authentic as a period but it is just all wrong for the spot.” Informant also felt the “materials do work well, the (paint) color doesn’t make it feel misplaced.” Overall, the Informants’ responses gave the materials found at 8 Chancery a compatibility to the streetscape not found in the scale and massing.

#### **4.2.1.29 Roof Form**

The Informants felt that roof form for 8 Chancery was not successful because of the size of the gable fronting on Hewins Street. Informant 1 felt the “embellishment (tympanum) on top” was good, but felt it would have better fit in if it were wider. Informant 2 thought the roof form was different and that “it was not wrong because the other two house have different roof shapes.” Informant 3 didn’t like the tympanum stating, “it’s like someone put a top on it...” She also felt the roof form was “way too narrow.” Informant 5 felt the “roof line doesn’t add anything...adds nothing to the streetscape.” Informant 6 struggled with the lack of roof slope facing the street. She stated, “you can’t see the roof on this one, you can’t see the shingles”, referring to the lack of roof slope and ridgeline running parallel to Hewins. The size of the roof directly correlates to the scale and massing of the building, so it is no surprise the informants felt it was inappropriate.

#### **4.2.1.30 Fenestration**

Some informants felt the fenestration pattern would have fit in better with a centered entryway, while others thought the windows were too small. Informant 1 felt the window sash looked good but thought they looked “small and crowded” when compared to the surrounding streetscape. Informant 2 thought the “window placement was appropriate for the house” but it “is the house that is not right for the space”, concluding that it was the size and massing that ultimately helped it blend into the streetscape. Informant 3's comments mirrored those of

Informant 1 stating, “the panes really help”, in reference to the sash pattern. She also picked up on the size of the windows, saying the “small windows don’t go with the other two homes.” She also pointed out that the “doorway is off center”, making it hard for the property to blend in.

Informant 5 also found the placement of the entry way off-putting to the centered fenestration of the other two homes around the entryway. She felt that “there is something off balance about it, maybe it is the offset door”. Informant 6 felt the same, stating “the fact that the door is not centered messes up the window placement a bit.” A centered entryway would have been more compatible to the streetscape, according to some informants but ultimately, an appropriate scale would have aided in the building’s acceptance.

#### **4.3 Which project the informants viewed as more compatible to the streetscape**



*Figure 4.6: Hewins Street and 51 Main Street.*

At the end of each interview, the researcher asked the Informants which altered streetscape was the most appropriate as new infill construction for Hewins Street. 51 Main Street was the property that each informant said fit best. Each interviewee had no knowledge of the property and its current location on the Town Green. This consensus, along with the focus group’s approval of 51 Main Street, was again an affirmation of the design criteria that I was looking to represent to non-professional historic preservation stakeholders in the photos. As



Informant 2 stated, “They really did it all right. Not pretending to be a reproduction.” Even though the Informants felt the 51 Main Street had certain issues, as mentioned above, overall, the basic design criteria represented in the HDC’s guidelines helped 51 Main Street become appropriate new construction for the Town Green and Hewins Street.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

From the interview process, the researcher was able to collect information from Informants by showing them a set of photographs accompanied by open ended questions. The researcher was able to group their meanings into five basic design criteria used by the Falmouth Historic Districts Commission: scale, massing, materials, roof form, and fenestration. Their answers provided a glimpse into how the non-professional public perceived the design criteria the HDC utilizes when approving new construction in Falmouth’s seven local historic districts, and reinforces the general goal of the HDC’s design review criteria for new construction. The Informant’s views on scale, massing, materials, roof form, and fenestration tended toward compatibility when they viewed the various altered streetscapes. It can be concluded from a majority of the opinions expressed that the Informants would have liked to see a structure that conformed to the design criteria of the structures currently existing in the Falmouth Village Historic District.

## **CHAPTER 5 – DISCUSSION**

### **5.1 Discussion Results**

#### **5.1.1 Substantive Community Meanings**

This study shows that non-professional stakeholders can provide substantive information to planning staff and historic districts commissions in regard to design review for new construction. It highlights that stakeholders with little or no background in the process of historic preservation design review can carefully understand and verbalize the design criteria and make decisions that are compatible with the goals set forth in Falmouth’s design review guidelines. The researcher’s overall intention was to get non-professionals talking about the design criteria to see if they could verbalize these ideas based on actual projects that have been approved and built. Asking specific questions about how the Informants felt about the projects allowed the researcher to see that non-professionals can articulate professional design ideas that can then be interpreted as design review criteria. The conceptual language of the professional can at times make historic preservation seem esoteric, which can turn off people not educated in the discipline. This collaborative approach to design review can assist in getting more community members that are not specifically interested or have a background in historic preservation involved in the historic preservation planning process.

#### **5.1.2 Limitations**

The limitations of this study include the small size of the sample of non-professional community stakeholders, the limited number of architectural styles that were altered into the Hewins Street streetscape, the choice to utilize only one streetscape in one historic district, and the limited geographical location of Falmouth. Because of the time constraints of this study, the researcher contacted and engaged a limited number of non-professionals in interviews. This

phase was also made difficult when Informants canceled and rescheduling was not an option, due to schedule conflicts. The researcher also had a limited skill set with Photoshop, so the photo elicitation component of the study took longer than a person well versed in the program and resulted in photos with less-than-ideal representations of the design criteria I was seeking to display. The research was also limited by the historical commission approved projects that could be photographed from the public right-of-way that were not obscured by cars and trees.

Out of the projects selected to photo-shop into the Hewins Street streetscape, none were radically differentiated. The researcher made this choice as a way of avoiding the traditional versus modern debate. Also, there are a limited number of modern architectural examples that have been approved by the HDC that I could not get permission to photograph. The inclusion of more modern and contemporary traditional architecture in the photo set could have further informed the study.

This study accurately presented meanings that were revealed through the interview process for this group of non-professional community stakeholders located in Falmouth. But, it cannot be generalized to the greater population of non-professional historic preservation stakeholders in the United States without further study. Because the results of this study are expected to be transferable to a similar population in a similar scale town, it is assumed that similar results could be observed and recreated with a comparable sample of non-professional community stakeholders. But, this inference should be confirmed by independent study.

### **5.1.3 Recommendations for Future Research**

Due to the success and limitations of the study, it is suggested that further research should be advanced and other conclusions be made based on this topic. Future research should target a larger sample of participants for interviews. A larger sample could provide more insight into how

non-professionals view new construction in Falmouth's Historic Districts. The sample should look at different factors, such as age, race, gender, and economic status, to see if a pattern develops in how participants view the design criteria based on these different factors.

Future research should also include different streetscapes and architectural styles. Numerous streetscapes exist in Falmouth's seven districts and each streetscape has different architectural styles and landscapes. A greater variety of architectural styles to alter into the streetscape should also be considered. All of these factors would more than likely elicit new information not made available in this study.

Future research could also focus on community perceptions for individual design criteria, such as fenestration patterns for specific streetscapes and individual districts. This research can involve what types of window light patterns or window sizes a community deems appropriate for new construction. The use of Photoshop and photos is a powerful tool in communicating the ideas of a community to a historical commission and can be utilized for much of the design review process, not just new construction projects.

## **5.2 New Skills and Investment by a Historical Commission**

Conducting this research does not require a large investment of money, although learning Photoshop, and conducting the interviews does take time. To replicate this process is within reason for a historical commission or planning department. The most money spent was in the printing of photos at a local printer, but there are more cost-effective alternatives to printing. The researcher was able to learn the basics of Photoshop via the website Lynda.com, a website that teaches software related skills. The cost can range from \$250 dollars to \$375 dollars per year. Fortunately, the researcher was able to access the training for free through my graduate school program. The researcher spent an estimated 10 hours learning Photoshop and another 5 hours

creating the altered streetscapes. Photoshop is accessible through the cloud, so the investment in costly software is not necessary. Access to Photoshop can range from \$10 to \$20 dollar per month. Of course, you need access to a digital camera, and an understanding of how to photograph architecture. There are tutorials available on Lynda.com that teach the basics of photographing architecture and since smart phones have high quality cameras, taking photos is fairly convenient. In sum, the process is within reach and, depending on the budget of a planning department or historical commission, it can be replicated.

### **5.3 Implications for the Preservation Planning Practice**

If historic preservation planning is to play a vital role a community's zeitgeist and an important part in how local government works, practitioners need to devise ways of engaging the community. Preservation, especially in Falmouth, has been negatively perceived as an obstruction to the rights of people's private property. Getting the community involved in something such as design review has the potential to integrate historic preservation into the mindset of how the community perceives itself and its future development. Historic district regulation has done little to incorporate community significance in district regulation, therefore allowing negative perceptions by the general population to continue. Preservation planners and historical commissions can continue this negative trend or become proactive and work toward a solution that is mutually beneficial for the community and its historic resources.

### **5.4 Conclusion**

The overall results demonstrate that non-professional informants can verbalize the design criteria used by the Falmouth Historical Commission. Their responses either directly referenced the design criteria the researcher was trying to explore or the information was coded into the design parameters. For example, when it came to assessing fenestration, informants either

directly referenced symmetry or stated that the window placement was off balance in comparison to the surrounding streetscape. Informant 3, when assessing the fenestration of 141 Locust Street, felt the four windows on one side of the door and the two windows on the other side of the entry didn't match the even quantity of windows found flanking the entryway on the surrounding houses. This response tells me that the Informant would have rather seen a design matching that fenestration pattern. Furthermore, the unanimous selection by the Informants of 51 Main Street was an affirmation that the community is in agreement with the guidelines.

The guidelines state that it is the intention of the Falmouth Historic Districts design guidelines (2011) to ensure that new buildings in the districts will be “compatible with the buildings in their immediate vicinity and with historical settings in the district as a whole.” (p. 45) The Informant's meanings suggest that the goal of new infill construction in a historic district is to create a compatible design that harmonizes with the surrounding streetscape. When reviewing a project through the lens of the design criteria, scale; massing; materials; roof form; fenestration, for new construction, the informants overwhelmingly felt that the design criteria presented to them should fit into the surrounding streetscape. The individual responses espoused by the Informants suggested a structure that is similar to the scale, massing, materials, roof form, and fenestration of 40 Main Street and 20 Hewins Street, the houses surrounding the Photo shopped projects. And, the overwhelming choice of 51 Main Street as the structure that best fits in further reinforces the notion that compatibility and harmony in design was the Informants' goal for new construction. In sum, the Informant interviews affirmed the design guidelines and provided a system for the historical commission to begin engaging the community in a more meaningful way.

As outlined in Chapter 3, the purpose of this qualitative study is to provide greater understanding of how the community can become directly involved in the design review process, and provide historical commissions with valuable information that can lead to an appropriate design. By possessing a better awareness of how the design review guidelines for new construction are interpreted by the community, historical commissions can involve the community in the preservation planning process and approve projects that the community deem appropriate. This planning technique may provide more community support for district regulations and potentially diminish the impact of controversial new construction projects that all too often do not take into account the concerns of the community.

In Chapter 2, a review of the existing literature explored the issue of involving the public in preservation planning but showed very little has been written about involving the community directly in the design review of new construction. The community is the immediate beneficiary of what their historic districts look like and should have more say in what is built, aside from public comment at an open meeting. However, making public engagement time and cost efficient for a historical commission is important. Keeping the public on issue during the design review process is important. As Gorski (2009) states, “community members often bring issues into a design review process that are outside the standards and guidelines that govern the process.” Gorski continues, “Community concerns should be viewed in the context of design review and the standards, and decisions should not be based upon concerns outside this context.” (p. 15) The exploration of the design review criteria themes in photographs, along with interviews, has shown that non-professional community stakeholders can provide important information to a historical commission when approving new construction. It also allows the community direct involvement in the preservation planning process.

Also in Chapter 2, the literature reviewed how the profession of community planning and historic preservation vary in their interaction with the public. Both professions continually reassess their best practices, yet do so in different silos. As community planning has evolved, so has the practice of engaging the public. As historic preservation planning has evolved, the practice has done less in the way of gathering the values of the community. Historical commissions rely on expert-created criteria for assessing significance or follow the Standards when reviewing changes to locally protected district fabric. More research is being done in the way of addressing how community significance can be woven into the process of protecting the community's historic resources. As explored in Chapter 2, values-based planning is changing the way preservation professionals approach historic preservation. Documents like the Burra Charter are assessing the significance of historic resources by engaging multiple stakeholder viewpoints and allowing preservation planners the ability to derive deeper community meaning and context for design decisions. We have also seen this transition toward a values based system in America, within academics circles and historic preservation programs. Unfortunately, there is still a disconnect in how preservation practitioners and historical commissions plan for the protection of historic resources. It is important for the community to be involved in the preservation planning process, especially in the creation of new construction in local historic districts. Preservation planners and local historical commission have to develop ways of better engaging the community in the process of approving new construction. This research explores one successful way historical commissions can do more to involve the public.



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**APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A: RWU HUMAN SUBJECT REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL**

**ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY  
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW BOARD**

**COVER SHEET FOR RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSALS**

Primary Investigator/Faculty Advisor: Dr. Catherine Zipf  
Date of Submission: 2.03.2015  
School/Department: School of Architecture, Art, and Historic Preservation - Historic Preservation  
Names of Additional Researchers: Corey Pacheco

Title of Research Project: Value-enhanced Design Guidelines: Balancing Expert Knowledge with Community Values When Regulating Infill Construction in Historic Districts  
Grant Funding Supporting this Research: N/A

**[Check one] Academic level for this project:**

Faculty/Administration     Graduate     Undergraduate

**[Check one] Review sought by principal investigator:** Refer to the HSRB handbook guidelines. Note that the HSRB may change the review type.

EXEMPT     EXPEDITED     FULL

**Researcher Code of Ethics:** I declare that I have read the Roger Williams University Statement of Researchers' Ethical Principles for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research and am familiar with my obligations thereunder. Furthermore, I agree to abide by that Statement of Ethical Principles adopted by Roger Williams University as part of the Human Subjects Review Board policy.

*Catherine Zipf*  
Investigator's signature

*For HSRB Board use only:*

Tracking #: GS-14-01-11 (renewed)

**[Check one] Committee decision regarding review:**

EXEMPT     EXPEDITED     FULL

**[Check one] Approval status:**

Approved  
 Resubmit

*Jason Patch*    02/04/16  
Signature of Chairperson    Date

**All on-going projects must be renewed one year after the approval date.**

## APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT MATERIALS

### **Informed Consent form for M.S. Historic Preservation Thesis: Values-enhanced Design Guidelines: Balancing Expert Knowledge with Community Values When Regulating Infill Construction in Historic Districts.**

You are being asked to participate in a research project conducted by Corey Pacheco M.S. Historic Preservation candidate in the School of Architecture, Art, and Historic Preservation at Roger Williams University (RWU).

Roger Williams University  
Department of Historic Preservation  
School of Architecture, Art and Historic Preservation  
One Old Ferry Road, Bristol, R.I. 02809-2921

Principal Investigator: Dr. Catherine Zipf, Assistant Professor of Historic Preservation  
Phone: 401-254-5472; email: [czipf@rwu.edu](mailto:czipf@rwu.edu); office SAAHP 247

Co-investigator: Corey B. Pacheco, Graduate student Historic Preservation program  
Phone: 774-201-9431; email: [cpacheco181@g.rwu.edu](mailto:cpacheco181@g.rwu.edu)

**PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:** The purpose of this study is to understand how non-expert historic preservation stakeholders in Falmouth perceive new infill construction in relation to the Falmouth Historic District Design Review Guidelines.

**PROCEDURE AND PARTICIPATION:** You will participate in an interview where you look at a selection of architectural photos. Your participation may range from 15 to 30 minutes. The initial question asked will be: Choose the photo you feel is the most appropriate for new construction in Hewin Street streetscape of the Falmouth Village Historic District? The following interview questions will pertain to, but are not limited to: Discussing your opinions on architectural features and designs on new buildings that have been approved in Falmouth Historic Districts Commission (FHDC). Notes will be taken, if the participant agrees, an audio recording will be made of the interview.

**RISKS AND BENEFITS:** The research will present no more than minimal risk. There are no anticipated risks associated with this study. We expect the research to benefit you by gaining a greater understanding of how the non-expert public perceives new construction in relation to projects that have been approved by the FHDC. Your information can potentially be used to develop ways to make historic preservation planning more participatory by including non-expert preservation stakeholders in the planning process for Falmouth's historic resources.

**VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION:** Your participation is completely voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your present or future relationship with the university, its faculty, students, or staff. You have the right to withdraw from the research at any time without penalty. You also have the right to refuse to answer any question(s) for any reason, without penalty.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Your individual privacy will be maintained in all publications or presentations resulting from this study. Your participation in this research is confidential. Only the investigator and his thesis advisor and reader will have access to your identity and to information that can be associated with you. In the event of publication, pseudonyms will be used. In order to preserve the confidentiality of your responses, all files will be stored in password protected files.



**RIGHT TO ASK QUESTIONS:**

If you have any questions regarding this research you can contact the principal investigator:  
Dr. Catherine Zipf, Assistant Professor of Historic Preservation  
Phone: 401-254-5472; email: [czipf@rwu.edu](mailto:czipf@rwu.edu); office SAAHP 247

**OR MYSELF:**

Corey Pacheco  
[cpacheco181@g.rwu.edu](mailto:cpacheco181@g.rwu.edu)  
774-201-9431

This is to certify that I consent to or give permission for my participation as a volunteer in this research study. I have read this form and understand the content.

---

Participant's Signature and Date

---

Printed Name of Participant

This is to certify that I have defined and explained this research study to the participant named above.

---

Researcher's Signature and Date

**APPENDIX C: IMAGES**



*Figure 4.1: Hewins Street and 137 Shore Street*



*Figure 4.2: Hewins Street and 141 Locust Street*



*Figure 4.3: Hewins Street and 51 Main Street*



*Figure 4.4: Hewins Street and 597 West Falmouth Highway*



*Figure 4.5: Hewins Street and 8 Chancery Lane.*

**APPENDIX D:**

**D1 – FOCUS GROUP RATING RESULT**

Focus Group Data Collection									
Total Sheet for Focus Group Design review criteria for Hewins Street streetscape photographs									
Advisor: Catherine Zipf									
Researcher: Corey Pacheco									
Institution: Roger Williams University									
Focus Group Informant	Design Criteria								
	Streetscape	Scale	Massing	Materials	Alignments and Rhythms	Roof Form	Fenestration	Total	
Patricia Kerfoot	<i>Hewin and 8 Chancery Lane</i>	2	2	4	1	2	4	15	
Patricia Kerfoot	<i>Hewins and 597 West Falmouth Hwy</i>	3	3	3	2	2	3	16	
Patricia Kerfoot	<i>Hewins and 681 West Falmouth Highway</i>	2	2	2	2	2	3	13	
Patricia Kerfoot	<i>Hewins and 137 Shore Street</i>	4	3	3	3	3	3	19	
Patricia Kerfoot	<i>Hewins and 51 Main Street</i>	4	4	4	5	3	3	23	
Patricia Kerfoot	<i>Hewins and 141 Locust Street</i>	3	3	3	3	5	4	21	
Patricia Kerfoot	<i>Hewins Street Original</i>	5	5	5	4	5	5	29	
Focus Group Informant	Streetscape	Scale	Massing	Materials	Alignments and Rhythms	Roof Form	Fenestration	Total	
Jim Fox	<i>Hewins and 8 Chancery Lane</i>	2	2	5	2	3	5	19	
Jim Fox	<i>Hewins and 597 West Falmouth Hwy</i>	3	3	3	4	3	4	20	
Jim Fox	<i>Hewins and 681 West Falmouth Highway</i>	3	3	4	3	3	3	19	
Jim Fox	<i>Hewins and 137 Shore Street</i>	4	4	4	4	3	4	23	
Jim Fox	<i>Hewins and 51 Main Street</i>	4	4	4	4	4	5	25	
Jim Fox	<i>Hewins and 141 Locust Street</i>	4	4	4	4	4	5	25	
Jim Fox	<i>Hewins Street Original</i>	5	5	5	5	5	5	30	
Focus Group Informant	Streetscape	Scale	Massing	Materials	Alignments and Rhythms	Roof Form	Fenestration	Total	
Barbara M. Weyand	<i>Hewins and 8 Chancery Lane</i>	1	2	5	3	4	4	19	
Barbara M. Weyand	<i>Hewins and 597 West Falmouth Hwy</i>	3	4	4	1	2	3	17	
Barbara M. Weyand	<i>Hewins and 681 West Falmouth Highway</i>	2	2	3	3	2	3	15	
Barbara M. Weyand	<i>Hewins and 137 Shore Street</i>	3	3	4	3	3	3	19	

Barbara M. Weyand	<i>Hewins and 51 Main Street</i>	4	4	5	5	3	5	26
Barbara M. Weyand	<i>Hewins and 141 Locust Street</i>	3	3	3	4	4	5	22
Barbara M. Weyand	<i>Hewins Street Original</i>	5	5	5	4	4	4	27
Focus Group Informant	<i>Streetscape</i>	Scale	Massing	Materials	Alignments and Rhythms	Roof Form	Fenestration	Total
Robert Leary	<i>Hewins and 8 Chancery Lane</i>	1	1	3	1	2	2	10
Robert Leary	<i>Hewins and 597 West Falmouth Hwy</i>	2	2	2	1	1	3	11
Robert Leary	<i>Hewins and 681 West Falmouth Highway</i>	1	1	2	1	1	3	9
Robert Leary	<i>Hewins and 137 Shore Street</i>	2	3	3	3	3	3	17
Robert Leary	<i>Hewins and 51 Main Street</i>	4	4	4	4	4	4	24
Robert Leary	<i>Hewins and 141 Locust Street</i>	3	1	1	2	3	3	13
Robert Leary	<i>Hewins Street Original</i>	5	3	4	3	4	4	23
Focus Group Informant	<i>Streetscape</i>	Scale	Massing	Materials	Alignments and Rhythms	Roof Form	Fenestration	Total
Christiane Collins	<i>Hewins and 8 Chancery Lane</i>	2	4	3	2	2	3	16
Christiane Collins	<i>Hewins and 597 West Falmouth Hwy</i>	4	4	3	4	4	3	22
Christiane Collins	<i>Hewins and 681 West Falmouth Highway</i>	2	2	1	2	2	2	11
Christiane Collins	<i>Hewins and 137 Shore Street</i>	4	4	4	4	4	4	24
Christiane Collins	<i>Hewins and 51 Main Street</i>	4	4	4	3	3	2	20
Christiane Collins	<i>Hewins and 141 Locust Street</i>	3	3	3	3	2	2	16
Christiane Collins	<i>Hewins Street Original</i>	4	4	4	4	4	4	24
<b>Design Criteria Final Total for all Streetscapes</b>								
<i>Streetscape</i>	Pat Kerfoot	Jim Fox	Barbara Weyand	Robert Leary	Christiane Collins	Total		
<i>Hewins and 8 Chancery Lane</i>	15	19	19	10	16	79		
<i>Hewins and 597 West Falmouth Hwy</i>	16	20	17	11	22	86		
<i>Hewins and 681 West Falmouth Highway</i>	13	19	15	9	11	67		
<i>Hewins and 137 Shore Street</i>	19	23	19	17	24	102		
<i>Hewins and 51 Main Street</i>	23	25	26	24	20	118		
<i>Hewins and 141 Locust Street</i>	21	25	22	13	16	97		
<i>Hewins Street Original</i>	29	30	27	23	24	133		

## APPENDIX E:

### E1 – FOCUS GROUP OUTLINE AND RATING SHEET

#### Focus Group Outline

##### Objective:

The objective of the focus group is to rate six photographs containing new construction projects approved by the Falmouth Historic Districts Commission, which have been “conjecturally” photo-shopped into the center property of the Hewins Street streetscape on the Falmouth Village Green. The objective is to choose the projects that best represent new construction infill within the Hewins Street streetscape in the Falmouth Village Historic District. The three highest rated photos based on design review criteria will be used for photo elicitation interviews with informants, not professionally trained in historic preservation practice, to help determine if non experts can help planning staff inform the process of creating design review guidelines for Falmouth’s Local Historic Districts.

##### Discussion Guide:

I will ask the focus group informants to rate the photographs based on the design criteria for new construction according to the Falmouth Historic District Design Review guidelines.

Please rate the photographs from one (1) to five (5) based on the new construction’s design criteria and overall compatibility to the surrounding streetscape and area. Thirty (30) being the highest score.

##### Hewins Street Original

The rating design criteria is as follows:

<b>Scale:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Massing:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Materials:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Alignments and Rhythms:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Roof Form:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Fenestration:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

##### Total:

Open discussion and further elaboration as to why the design criteria worked best for certain photos and not others in this particular streetscape or setting.

