

HISTORICAL PLAQUE PROGRAM INFORMATION

WHAT IS THE WALTHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY PLAQUE PROGRAM?

The Waltham Historical Society (WHS) Plaque Program provides property owners in Waltham, Massachusetts with the opportunity to purchase a plaque which displays the year the structure was built. The goal of the WHS Plaque Program is to share Waltham's history and create a sense of pride in our community.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE WHS PLAQUE PROGRAM?

Any single/multi-family home or any commercial building in Waltham, Massachusetts is eligible to participate in the WHS Plaque Program, regardless of the age of the structure.

WHAT DOES THE WHS PLAQUE LOOK LIKE?

The WHS plaque is a 9" x 12" Oval PVC sign board, off-white background with black lettering. The WHS plaque includes the year that the structure was built and "Waltham Historical Society". If the MACRIS Historic Register database includes an established historic name of the building, then that name can be included on the plaque. Because this is considered a historical program, the names of the current owners may not be included on the plaque.



WHAT INFORMATION IS REQUIRED TO ORDER A WHS PLAQUE?

The applicant must provide the information and sources requested on the application. Before authorizing a WHS plaque, Waltham Historical Society volunteers will confirm the information provided on the application for the year the structure was built and the historic name of the house if there is one. Please be sure to include enough research information for our volunteers to use for this verification. Also, please note that the date given in the City Assessor's database on the City of Waltham Maps Online is often incorrect and is insufficient without the other information requested on the application form. Fee based research by volunteers may be available, inquire as to the availability and cost at: houseplaques@walthamhistoricalsociety.org

WHAT DOES THE WHS PLAQUE COST?

Program cost to applicant: \$125.00 per plaque, includes a one-year individual membership to the Waltham Historical Society for non-members or a \$100.00 for current members of the Waltham Historical Society.

WHERE DO I HANG MY WHS PLAQUE?

It is recommended that the plaque be mounted on the front of the building, so it is clearly visible to the public. Mounting hardware is not included, installing the plaque is the responsibility of the property owner. The Waltham Historical Society is not responsible for any losses or damages that may result from this installation

DOES HAVING A WHS PLAQUE AFFECT THE LEGAL STATUS OF THE BUILDING?

No, the WHS plaque does not affect the legal status of your house or building in any way. The only time historical concerns affect the legal status of a building to the city of Waltham is when a demolition permit is requested. In this case, all buildings 75 years of age or older are automatically evaluated by the Waltham Historical Commission for historical significance.

Also, in Waltham, the city has no control over what you do with the appearance of your house short of demolition. No one can tell you what color to paint your house, what replacement windows to choose, or other such modifications. However, if you take pride in the historical appearance of your house, we encourage you to consult such programs as Historic New England's Historic Homeowners Program on ways to enhance its historical appeal.

WHERE DO I FIND INFORMATION ON MY BUILDING?

There are many resources available, below are a few links that can be used to assist in your research:

- **Waltham Public Library** - Online resources are available including Historic Maps of Waltham, City Directories (1871-1973) and Annual Listings (1867-1973). <https://waltham.lib.ma.us/local-history-genealogy/land-neighborhood-records/>
- **Massachusetts Historical Commission (MACRIS)** - <https://mhc-macris.net/>
- **Waltham Historical Commission** – Historical Maps of Waltham <https://www.city.waltham.ma.us/historical-commission/pages/historical-maps>
- **City of Waltham Building Department** – “Building” or “Street” Card listing issued permits since about 1920 [https://web-server.city.waltham.ma.us/GovernEcomponents/WebUserInterface/\(S\(tlfkeu3ckefymqklclhhoeo\)\)/WebPortal/WEB_PT_MAIN.aspx?command=REPORTPARAMETERSTYLE&style=&group=PidGroup](https://web-server.city.waltham.ma.us/GovernEcomponents/WebUserInterface/(S(tlfkeu3ckefymqklclhhoeo))/WebPortal/WEB_PT_MAIN.aspx?command=REPORTPARAMETERSTYLE&style=&group=PidGroup)
- **Massachusetts Registry of Deeds** - Best for property deeds after 1870. <https://www.masslandrecords.com/>
- **Familysearch.org** – Property deeds prior to 1870 may be available (Free registration is required to view the documents) <https://www.familysearch.org/search/image/index?owc=MCB2-86X%3A361613501%3Fcc%3D2106411>

Additional links can be found on our website: <https://walthamhistoricalsociety.org/houseplaques/>

WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR ORDERING A WHS PLAQUE?

You may send your application, related documents and payment electronically on our website: <https://walthamhistoricalsociety.org/houseplaques/> You may also mail the application, a recent photograph of the home (optional, to be included in our database), and a check made payable to:

Waltham Historical Society
190 Moody Street
Waltham, MA 02453
Attn: WHS Plaque Program

Plaques will be ready approximately 4-6 weeks after order. We will contact you to arrange for pickup in Waltham.

Still have questions? Please contact: houseplaques@walthamhistoricalsociety.org