



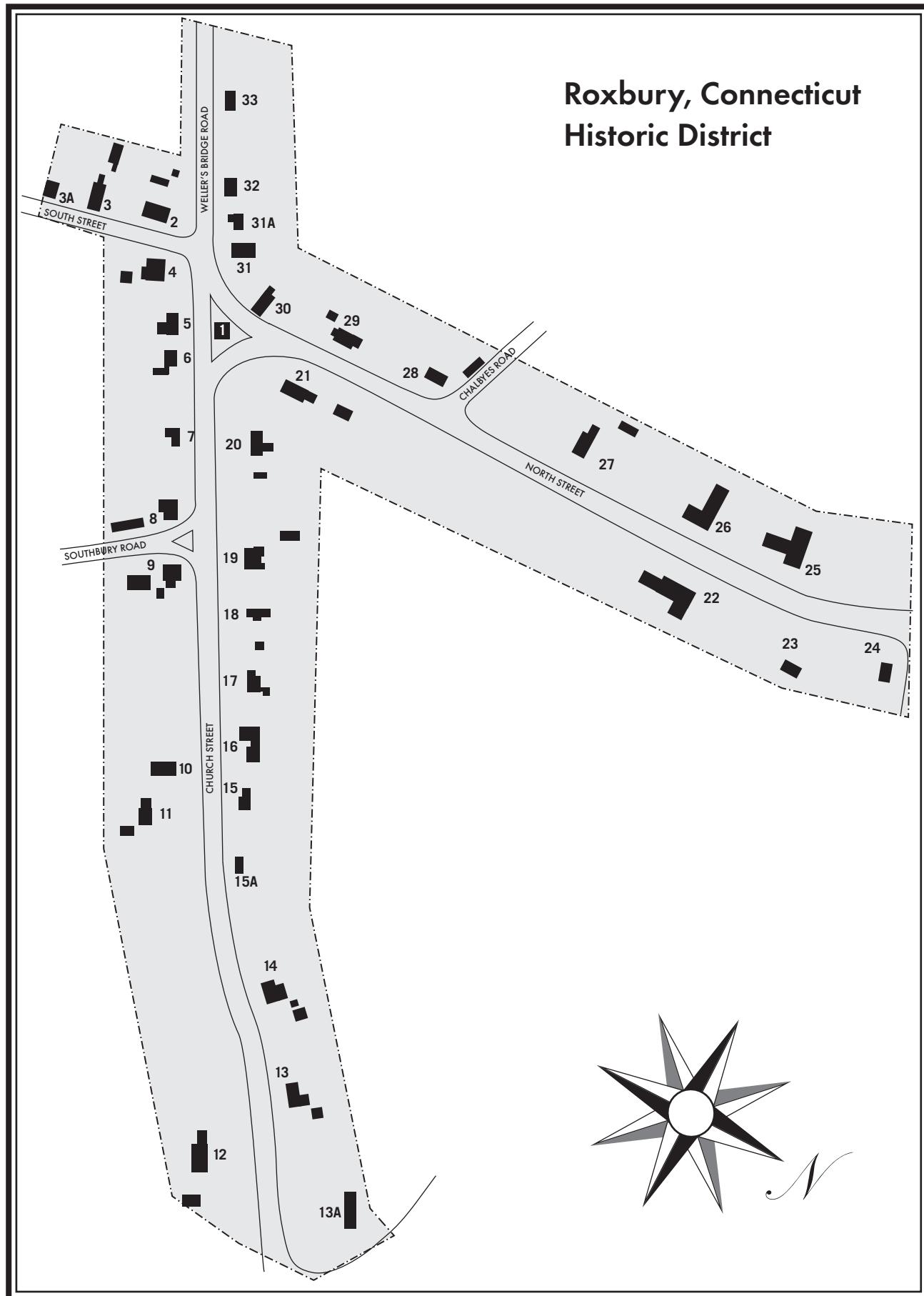
Roxbury Historic District

Established in 1966

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Revised 2018

Roxbury, Connecticut Historic District



Key to Roxbury's Historic District

- 1 Col. Seth Warner Monument, 1858
- 2 Asahel Bacon House, circa 1784
- 3, 3A Town Hall, Hall of Records, circa 1879 and 1933
- 4 Gen. Ephraim Hinman House, circa 1784
- 5 Edward C. Prindle House (date unknown)
- 6 Ella Thomas House, circa 1838
- 7 Frederick Lathrop Hat Shop, circa 1840
- 8 Phineas Smith House, circa 1796
- 9 Burwell Tavern-Thomas House, circa 1785
- 10 St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, circa 1886
- 11 Louisa Booth House, circa 1858
- 12 Garry Hurlbut House, circa 1825
- 13 Mary E. Smith Tenant House, circa 1865
- 13A Outbuilding at the eastern end of Church Street
- 14 Dr. Myron Downs House, circa 1842
- 15 James Leavenworth House, circa 1842
- 15A Firehouse
- 16 Congregational Church, circa 1838-1843
- 17 Sheldon B. Smith House, circa 1840
- 18 Congregational Parsonage, circa 1883
- 19 Judge Nathan Smith House, circa 1790
- 20 Amasa Lathrop House, circa 1801
- 21, 21A Hodge Memorial Library, Hurlbut Bridge, circa 1937
- 22 Hodges Market, 1934-35
- 23 34 North Street
- 24 7 Ranney Hill Road
- 25 Roxbury Town Hall, 1990
- 26 Roxbury Firehouse, 1975
- 27 Frederick W. Lathrop House, circa 1840
- 28 Rev. Zephaniah Swift House, circa 1795
- 29 5 North Street
- 30 Roswell Ransom Tavern, circa 1740-1845
- 31, 31A Christ Church Episcopal and Parish House, circa 1801/1861, circa 1835
- 32 Elisha Patterson House, circa 1809
- 33 Orlando Lewis Homestead, circa 1846



The new addition to the Old Town Hall, now the Senior Center (west, rear) is differentiated from the historic building by a setback in the roof and plane of the building.

The Roxbury Historic District was established in 1966 to ensure the preservation of our Town Center. Then, as now, there were threats to our historic structures. The citizens of Roxbury, concerned about the possible loss of these structures, enacted a Historic Preservation Ordinance which established the Roxbury Historic District Commission (HDC) to oversee the district. The Historic District, as shown on the map on page 2, encompasses the area within 225 feet of the roadside boundary line of each property.

Certificate of Appropriateness

All property owners located in the Historic District need to apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness (C of A) to make a change or addition to their property. This includes, but is not limited to, new buildings or structures, additions, alterations or any element permanently affixed to a building or to the ground that can be seen from a public way or road. In determining the visibility of a proposal, the HDC cannot take into consideration screening by vegetation as this may be removed in the future.

The application for a C of A can be found online at www.roxburyct.com (Boards and Commissions/Historic District Com). When a request for a C of A is received by the

HDC a public hearing is scheduled and posted in the newspaper of record.

The Commission meets every third Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm, in the Town Hall, to review applications. All interested parties are welcome to attend the public hearing. Also, a pre-hearing may be scheduled to discuss plans, ask questions and solicit advice before submitting an application.

When the HDC evaluates applications for a C of A, the goal is to determine whether the proposed action or alterations will be compatible with the visual and historic character of the Roxbury Historic District. The HDC helps Roxbury residents preserve the distinctive character of the Historic District understanding that appropriate change is key to continued growth, livability, and prosperity.

Rather than relying on individual taste or preference, the HDC uses the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (see <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm>) and the following guidelines specific to the Roxbury Historic District.

Decisions are based on rigorous consideration of each application and by consistent reference to established standards. Every application is based on its own merits, and the deliberations and decisions of the HDC are not arbitrary or capricious. In addition, members of the HDC are required to have education or experience in related fields, such as: preservation, architecture, construction, landscaping, and design.

General Guidelines

Roxbury is a peaceful and charming village surrounded by wooded hillsides and open fields. The historic houses, barns, stately churches, picturesque rows of old stone walls and fences, mature trees and fields all contribute to the unique character of the Historic District. Unlike historic districts in many neighboring communities, our Historic District remains a vital residential neighborhood with a distinct “sense of place.”

The open land and picturesque views are integral to the rural character of the Historic District and warrant preservation. The centerpiece of the district is the Village Green. This broad expanse of lawn, flanking Church Street from South Street to Painter Hill Road, was designed as a shared amenity to be enjoyed by the entire town. The Green should remain free of obstruction, with landscaping limited to the rows of trees that are provided and maintained by the Town of Roxbury.

Driveways and walkways crossing the Green are to be kept to a minimum and parking of vehicles on the Green is discouraged.

To maintain the architectural compatibility between the existing buildings in the Historic District and any new architecture, all additions must be designed to be sympathetic to the style of the original structure. The mass of the addition should not overpower the original building, but should be diminished in scale to allow the main structure to dominate. Any addition should be distinguishable from the original, by a change in plane, scale or building material.

In addition, the exterior rhythm of a building's façade should not be affected by an interior alteration. When an entirely new structure is erected, it must be designed in an architectural style sympathetic to the surrounding buildings. New buildings must be sited in a manner that preserves the character of the District.



Top: A sympathetic addition connecting the Congregation Church to the church office. Above: The new Town Hall is an example of a contemporary design compatible with the Historic District.

BUILDING ELEMENTS

Building Material

A consistency of building materials contributes to the architectural coherence of the Historic District. Wood clapboards are the predominant siding material and should be used for new construction. Flush butt-joined wood planks and wood shingles are also suitable materials for new construction. Materials such as stone and brick should be limited to foundations and chimneys. Siding of man-made materials that visually imitate the required siding will not be acceptable on historic structures, but may be considered for new structures, to be reviewed by the HDC on a case-by-case basis.

The foundations of additions should match those of the original building in material. Foundations of new structures should be stone or faced with stone if they are visible from a public way. (A public way is any street, road, driveway, alley, pathway, parking area, lane, right-of-way, etc. to which the public has access.)

Scale

The buildings of the Historic District are generally small in scale, not exceeding 2½ stories in height. The HDC will review all new buildings and additions, public and private, for appropriateness of scale and proportion and roof pitch.

Roofs

The gable roof is recommended for new construction, since it is the most common type used in the Historic District. The pitch of a gable roof on an addition should match the existing pitch. The roof pitch for new structures should replicate those of historic examples within the Historic District. A flat roof is not acceptable.

Shingles are the primary roofing material in the Historic District. Although wood shingles are preferable, asphalt shingles are acceptable. The color of the asphalt shingles must be approved by the HDC since color is inherent to the material. Copper and metal roofing are also acceptable, subject to review.

Doors

Many of the entrance doors in the Historic District are especially distinctive. The HDC recommends raised panel doors for primary entrances. Batten doors or doors with panels below and true divided lights above are acceptable for secondary entrances. French doors with true divided lights will be reviewed by the HDC on a case-by-case basis. Storms and/or screen doors, when installed, should be constructed of wood.

Windows

The buildings in the Historic District have multi-paned wooden windows divided by muntins. These windows are characteristic of the periods in which the buildings were erected, and establish a rhythm across each building's facade that enhances the architecture. The replacement of original windows is discouraged. New windows should replicate the existing windows in their proportions and should be multi-paned with true divided lights. Most windows within the district are double-hung. Any other type of window will be reviewed by the HDC on a case-by-case basis.

Shutters & Window Boxes

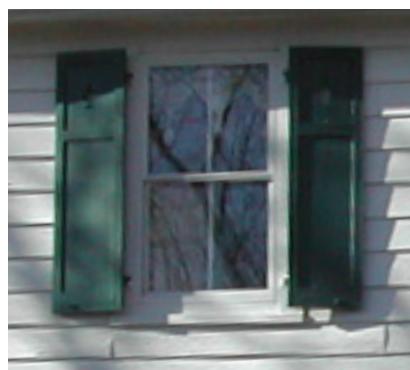
Many of the homes in the Historic District have Victorian shutters attached to the house. These wooden paneled or louvered shutters are mounted to the front of the window casing. If new shutters are to be installed, they should be sized to cover the window when closed, also be wooden, paneled or louvered, and be mounted on the front of the window casing, not to the side. The use of plastic or synthetic shutters is not acceptable. The use of window boxes, inappropriate for most buildings within the district, is subject to review.



The Nathan Smith house has more decorative features with a two-story pediment on the façade of the building and a Palladium window, supported by classical columns. The hip roof is distinctive in Roxbury.



This raised panel door, flanked by pilasters and windowlights, covered by a portico and highlighted by an appropriate lighting fixture is a distinctive entranceway in the Historic District.



These shutters are sized and attached correctly, so that when hinged shut they cover the entire windowcasing, minus the sill.

Exterior Building Trim

Exterior trim on additions to the original building should match or compliment that of the original structure in proportion, size, and placement. This includes, but is not limited to, soffits, fascia and window and door openings.

Secondary Buildings

The original outbuildings of the Historic District are primarily barns and farm sheds. New outbuildings should be similar in style, scale, material and detail to these structures. These secondary buildings should not dominate the primary residence, or interfere with the openness of the area.

Garages

Garages should be detached from the main house and be designed to suggest a traditional barn or shed. Garage doors should be designed to resemble barn doors.

Paving and Driveways

Stone paving is the most common material for walks and terraces and its use is recommended for new construction as well. Poured concrete walks, patios, or driveways are not permitted unless covered by a natural material such as stone or gravel. Gravel driveways are the most appropriate in the Historic District. Asphalt driveways are not permitted unless treated and maintained with a permanent gravel finish. The use of Belgium blocks for borders or aprons is not permitted.

Parking Areas

In order to maintain the rural character of the Historic District, and to not detract from historic buildings, parking areas should not be in front of a building, but should be situated at the rear whenever possible. Plantings to screen these parking areas from public view are also encouraged.

Property Enclosures

Old stonewalls and picket fences contribute to the historic character of the Historic District. New stone walls should be built in a traditional New England manner with dry-laid fieldstone. Picket fences should be made of wood and replicate the period fencing found in the Historic District. Split rail or planked fences are also acceptable, but should not be used on the front of a property. No fences should restrict existing views and open spaces. Stockade and tall privacy fences are not appropriate to the district. Metal, chain link and plastic fencing are not acceptable. The specific character of any new fence or wall will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.



Garages should be designed to suggest a traditional barn or shed.



An example of a traditional dry-laid fieldstone wall, and a rehabilitated wall in the background-all using local stone.

Recreational Structures

Pools, tennis courts and recreational equipment including, but not limited to, swing sets, climbing walls, etc. that are permanently attached to the ground are subject to a C of A by the HDC. Because of the incompatibility of these modern structures in an historic rural village, these structures should be sited behind an existing building, so that they are not visible from a public way. Additional plantings for screening may also be required. Tent structures will not be permitted.

Landscaping

Plant materials convey the physical location of the Historic District and provide a means of expressing regional identity. The HDC recommends the informal character of the tree plantings be maintained through the preservation of existing trees or the replanting of trees using historic or native species.

Signage

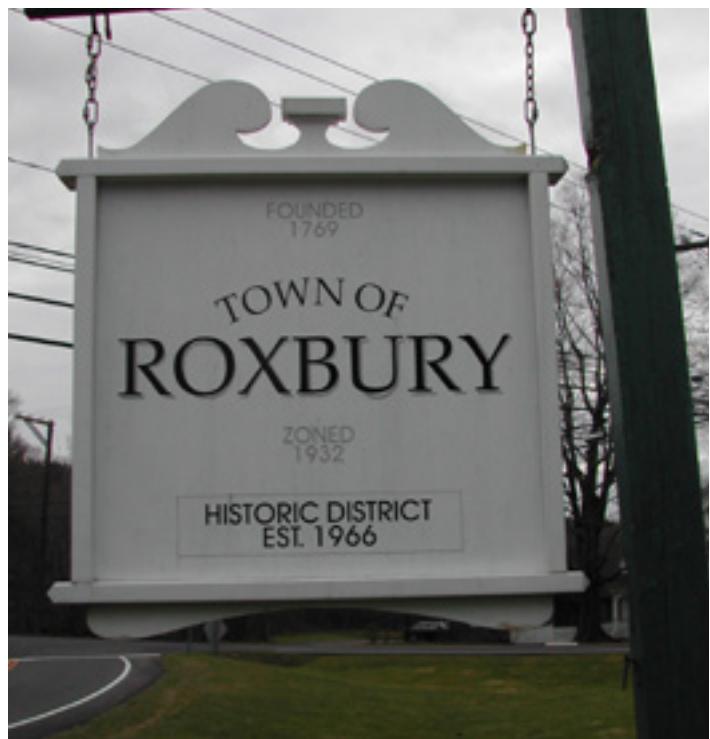
The use of uniform signage throughout the District is strongly encouraged. New signs should conform to zoning regulations and be designed with the traditional black on white format. Lighting of signs is to be reviewed by the HDC. If it is necessary to have more than one sign, it is recommended that the signs be grouped in a single format. Placement of signs on the Town Green is to be kept to a minimum.

Lighting

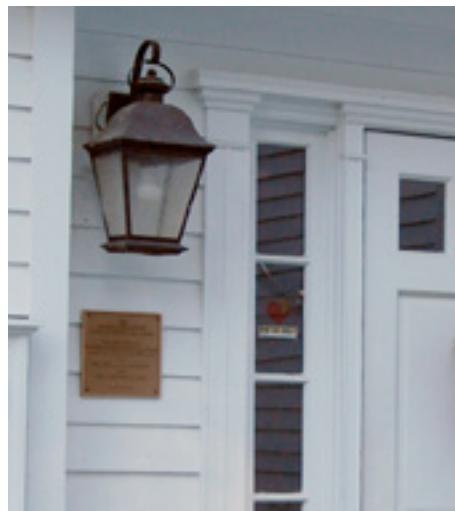
All lighting within the Historic District should be used with restraint, to address individual safety concerns without illuminating neighboring properties or the sky. The type and material of lighting fixtures should compliment the building's character and style. Copper or painted metal fixtures are preferred. Incandescent light sources are preferred, although new technologies that closely replicate incandescent sources, are considered. Path lighting, landscape lighting and floodlights are discouraged.

Paint Colors

The HDC does not regulate colors, unless inherent in the proposed material. It is recommended that the property owners select paint colors which are appropriate for the period of the building. The HDC can serve as a resource for providing color recommendations and historic paint sources for property owners.



The Roxbury sign on the triangle displays the simple black lettering on white board most representative of appropriate signage in the Historic District.



This lighting fixture is appropriate in style and material for the age of the building.

Solar Panels

The use of solar panels is acceptable within the Historic District, subject to placement review. Solar panels must be placed so that they are not visible from a public way. When placed on the roof of a building — preferably on an accessory structure — the slope of the panel must match the slope of the roof. The color of the panel should match the color of the roofing material. Panels must be attached in such a way that they do not damage or compromise the roof and are readily detachable. If ground-mounted panels are proposed, they must be placed so that they are not visible from a public way. Plantings should be provided to screen the panels from view. For more information, please refer to the National Park Service Recommendations, posted on the HDC page of the Town of Roxbury website, www.roxburyct.com.



The Louise Booth House is an example of a Colonial cape style with a vernacular Roxbury “highplate” as seen in the half story above the windows on the main façade.

Garden Structures, Fountains, Lawn Ornaments and Sculptures

Garden structures, fountains, lawn ornaments and sculptures that are permanently fixed to the ground are subject to a C of A by the HDC. Garden structures, fountains, lawn ornaments and sculptures which are not fixed to the ground but, due to their weight, require equipment to be relocated will be considered permanent and require a C of A from the HDC.

Mechanical and Electronic Equipment

Mechanical equipment such as generators, propane tanks and air conditioning compressors require a C of A and should be screened from view. Satellite dishes should be mounted so that they are not visible from a public way. Ground-mounted dishes should be screened from view with plantings. Security cameras should be discreetly located and mounted in such a way that they are easily removable and do not compromise the integrity of the building.



The Phineas Smith house is a more formal variation of the Colonial style, sometimes labeled Georgian, with a central hall and two chimneys.



The Reverend Swift House could be considered an example of the Federal style in Roxbury with its well-proportioned windows and refined decorative details in the Palladium windows and doorway.

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

The buildings in the Roxbury Historic District span more than 200 years and represent prevailing architectural styles.

The Colonial style, from the pre-revolutionary era to the early 19th century, is characterized by simple box-like forms, often featuring a central chimney. Simple vernacular Colonial forms include the Saltbox and Cape styles. A variation of the vernacular Cape in Roxbury includes the high plate Cape (Louisa Booth House, page 9). A more formal variation is the Georgian Colonial (Phineas Smith House, page 9), with a central hallway and twin chimneys. More stylish examples of Georgian Colonials are elaborated with Palladian windows or porticos (Nathan Smith House, page 6) with columns, derived from classical architecture.

The Federal Style, 1800-1830, features a more refined interpretation of classical details. Federal details include semicircular “fanlight” windows, used above doorways or in gables, and delicate pilasters and cornices (Rev. Swift House, page 9).

The Greek Revival style, 1835-1870, draws inspiration from the temple forms of Ancient Greece. Distinguishing details include gable end sited to the road, full pediments on gable ends, pronounced cornices and wide pilasters at corners and doorway surrounds. A large rectangular multipane window in the gable pediment is a popular local feature (Ella Thomas house, top).

The Victorian Period, 1860-1915, features an eclectic mix of styles including Italianate, Gothic Revival, and the Queen Anne. During the Victorian Period elaborate decoration was made possible by the technological advances of the machine age (Congregational Parsonage, center).

The Colonial Revival Style, 1900-1940, was inspired by the Architecture of the American Colonial period. Interpretation of the style was much freer than the original, often combining elements in new and innovative ways. Many of Roxbury’s early homes include Colonial Revival additions or renovations (Roxbury Market, bottom).



The Ella Thomas House is sited gable end to the street, representing a temple, which is a popular feature of the Greek Revival style being built in America's early republic.



The first Congregational Parsonage with its cross gables and patterned siding, is considered to be built in the Queen Anne style during the Victorian Period.



The Roxbury Market was built in a Colonial Revival style as seen in its mixture of elements including a gambrel roof, twin chimneys, and roof dormers.