

Jonesborough  
Historic Zoning  
Commission  
Property  
Designation  
Committee  
Handbook

[Edited February 28, 2002 to include H-2 Zone]

[Amended by the Historic Zoning Commission February 28, 2002 changing criterion #3 and increasing the number of criteria for contributing to 3 or more.]

## **Introduction and Background**

This handbook is intended to provide the Property Designation Committee with the tools and information needed to review properties in the Historic Zone according to the Historic Zoning Commission's property designation criteria.

An ad hoc committee of Historic Zoning Commissioners and representatives of the Historic Jonesborough Foundation and Jonesborough-Washington County History Museum developed the property designation criteria in 1999. Nancy Jane Baker of the Tennessee Historical Commission advised the committee.

The criteria were developed for use throughout the Historic Zones as a means of determining whether or not a property contributes to Jonesborough's character. In developing the criteria, the committee considered the entire Zones H-1 and H-2 and reviewed numerous dissimilar properties in order to determine the overall applicability of the criteria.

Properties' land use zoning, aesthetic quality, location in the Zone, and ownership were not considered.

## **Purpose and Composition of Property Designation Committee**

The Property Designation Committee is charged with evaluating properties in Jonesborough's H-1 and H-2 overlay zones according to the property designation criteria adopted by the Jonesborough Historic Zoning Commission. Approximately one-fifth of the properties in both Zones together shall be reviewed each year. Within any five-year period, all properties in both Historic Zones will be reviewed. The secretary of the HZC shall notify the owners all properties being reviewed prior to the annual review. The committee is also charged with reviewing properties as they are added to the Zones. The Committee is to report its findings to the Commission upon completing its yearly review and upon the completion of special reviews conducted at the Commission's request. The secretary of the Commission shall notify the owners of properties being reviewed by the committee as part of any special review being conducted at the Commission's request.

The committee shall seek training and guidance from the Tennessee Historical Commission staff every three years. The committee shall formally review the criteria every five years and shall recommend to the HZC any changes it deems necessary.

The PDC should have no less than four and no more than six members. At least one-third of the committee's members should come from outside the Historic Zoning Commission. Every effort should be made for an architect to serve on the committee.

A file is to be maintained for each property. The file should contain all property designation worksheets and reports for that property, photographs of the property taken at the time of each review, any available documentation of the property's age, and any other available information about the property. The property designation committee chairperson is responsible for maintaining the files.

## Applying the Criteria

### **The yearly review**

The purpose of the yearly review is to ensure that all properties in the H-1 and the H-2 Zones are reviewed every five years without reviewing the entire Zones in a single year. Approximately one-fifth of the properties in both Zones taken together should be reviewed each year. It is not necessary for the review in any one year to include properties in both zones so long as all properties in each zone are reviewed once in any five-year period.

Most properties' status will not change. Particular attention should be given to properties that have been significantly altered since the last review.

A new property designation report should be issued for each property reviewed. Property files should be updated to include new photographs and any information about the property that has been obtained since the last review.

### **Special reviews**

The PDC is responsible for reviewing properties as they are added to the H-1 and H-2 Zones. The review should be done as soon as possible after the properties are added. The PDC is also responsible for reviewing any property for which a contributing or non-contributing designation has not been made before the Commission will consider approval of its demolition.

### **Procedure**

Each PDC should develop its own procedure for reviewing properties. Before submitting final reports, however, the committee chairperson must be sure that a majority of the committee members agree with the final reports.

All committee members should read and understand the criteria before beginning the review. The following explanation is intended to help clarify the criteria and should be consulted as often as necessary.

## The Criteria

**Property is a natural feature having an association with an event or person significant to the history of Jonesborough, the State of Tennessee, or the United States, or which is significant because of size, condition, uniqueness, location, or setting.**

Natural features like old trees, open spaces, waterways, rock formations, and distinct landforms like hills, glades, and valleys are an integral part of the overall feel of an area. Quite often they are associated with persons or events of historical significance.

Examples:

1. A spring which was the primary source of water for the community, or a segment of it.
2. A meadow or other open area in an otherwise developed area.

**Property includes an outbuilding embodying or providing for a given use, period, style, and/or setting.**

Jonesborough once had a multitude of outbuildings. Many of them have been lost as the town has shifted away from an agrarian-based economy.

Examples:

1. Of outbuildings providing for a given use: well houses, dairies, hen houses, barns, smoke houses, outhouses, etc.
2. Which embody a given period or style: mail-order garages from the 1920's, Victorian conservatories, outbuildings utilizing materials primarily associated with a specific time or architectural movement, e.g. garages built in the 1950's with aluminum casement windows and asbestos siding.
3. Providing for and/or embodying a given setting: outbuildings built to accommodate or utilize natural features like rock outcroppings or springs, or which are constructed of materials readily available in a particular location but not elsewhere, e.g. properties constructed of river rock next to a waterway.

**Property is an historical or cultural resource that was constructed prior to 1945.**

Prior to the current revision of this Handbook [2/28/02], this criterion applied if a property were more than 50 years old. However, after appropriate discussions in several Commission meetings and PDC meetings, the PDC recommended on 2/28/02 and the Commission agreed that this criterion should be changed to the specific year of construction prior 1945. This was in recognition of the fact that the dominant historic character of the H-1 and the H-2 Zones was well established by 1945 and that much of the development between 1945 and the establishment of Historic Zoning in 1970 was not consistent with the dominant historic character of the H-1 and H-2 Zones. It was fully recognized that a number of post-1945 structures would probably fulfill 3 or more other criteria for designation as contributing. Even though a moving 50-year time is used under National Register Criteria and is generally accepted in the criteria of Historic

Zones in many other communities, it did not seem applicable to Jonesborough's Historic Zones.

**Property is a building or buildings which embody distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or style or are representative of a recognized architect's or craftsman's work that is not substantially altered.**

Although Jonesborough has very few properties that can be clearly identified by a single architectural type or style, it does have many properties that have changed very little since being built and thus have architectural integrity. These properties can be regarded as embodying distinguishing characteristics.

One way to consider this issue is to ask whether or not the person who built the property under consideration or was involved with the last major architectural change, e.g. addition of a porch or other prominent feature, would recognize it today. For example, a frame house that was covered with aluminum siding in the 1970's but retained all or most of its decorative woodwork and windows could be regarded as having architectural integrity. A brick house covered with asbestos shingles or stucco in the 1950's would probably not be regarded as having architectural integrity.

**Property is a key focal point in the visual quality or character of the neighborhood, street, area or zone.**

A property is considered a key focal point if its size, location, mass, height, and/or situation accentuates its presence in the overall appearance of a street, area, or zone and does not detract from the majority of the surrounding properties.

When considering whether or not a property is a key focal point, one may want to visualize several views of the area and imagine it without the property in question. Another way to approach the question is to think about the area around the property and ask with what property is the area identified. As a general rule, focal point properties tend to be larger, set apart from neighboring properties, and more visible from a distance.

**Property is an historical or cultural resource that is identified with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the cultural history or development of Jonesborough, the State of Tennessee, or the United States.**

Whether or not a person or persons significantly contributed to the cultural history or development of a place can often be determined only with the passage of time. Careful consideration must be given to how the person contributed, the nature of his/her contribution, and the longevity of the contributor's significance.

Examples:

1. A house that was the retirement home of a former U.S. president, state governor, etc.
2. The home of a person who brought about significant changes to local institutions like school systems, city governments, primary industries, etc.

**Property is an historical or cultural resource that is the site of a significant historical event.**

As with historical persons, the significance of an event is often not realized until well after the fact. The significance of the event must be carefully determined. Every effort should be made to obtain clear documentation of the event that occurred on the site.

**Property is an historical or cultural resource representing patterns of Jonesborough's 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and subsequent cultural development.**

A property represents a pattern of development when its architecture indicates economic and/or cultural growth or change.

Examples:

1. A collection of houses built in the 1920's and 1930's in a previously undeveloped area indicate the cultural and economic development of the period and thus represent a pattern of development.
2. Buildings built in the 1960's scattered throughout an area developed primarily in the 19<sup>th</sup> century may indicate a period of economic change and thus represent a pattern of development.

PROPERTY DESIGNATION COMMITTEE  
Second Cycle, Year One, 2005

ADDRESS:

\_\_\_\_\_

PRESENT OWNERS: \_\_\_\_\_

Historical Name (if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_

- No alterations to the property noted.  
 Alterations to the property noted.

Description of alterations:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do these alterations lead to a change in designation?  no  yes  
If yes, designation change to:  contributing  non contributing

\_\_\_\_\_

- Request Updated Photographs  
 Updated Photographs Received

Date Received \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Evaluation Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed

# Jonesborough Historic Zoning Commission Outbuilding Designation Report

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Contributing: \_\_\_\_\_  
Noncontributing: \_\_\_\_\_

Description: Please note material and construction.

Foundation: \_\_\_\_\_ Windows: \_\_\_\_\_

Walls: \_\_\_\_\_ Doors: \_\_\_\_\_

Roof: \_\_\_\_\_ Style: \_\_\_\_\_

Distinguishing Characteristics: \_\_\_\_\_

Mark all characteristics that apply:

- \_\_\_\_ 1. Outbuilding provides for a given historical use, for example: blacksmith, kitchen, smokehouse, stable, laundry, privy, carriage house, etc. Consideration made regardless of age. If yes, describe historical use: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_ 2. Outbuilding embodies a given period or style, for example Greek Revival, Victorian, Craftsman, local Vernacular, etc. If yes, describe: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_ 3. Outbuilding was constructed before 1945. Indicate date or period of construction: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_ 4. Outbuilding is a structure that embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or style that is representative of a recognized architect's or craftsman's work, which has not been substantially altered. List the individual or firm who designed/built the structure: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_ 5. The outbuilding is identified with a significant person or persons who contributed to the cultural history or development of Jonesborough, the State of Tennessee, or the United States. List the individuals name: \_\_\_\_\_



**\_\_\_ 6. Outbuilding is identified with a significant historical event. List the event: \_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_ 7. Outbuilding, which has been built after 1945, but with old materials and embodies an historical use, style, or period. List use, style, or period: \_\_\_\_\_**

**If 2 or more criteria are selected then the outbuilding is a contributing resource.**

**Report completed by: \_\_\_\_\_**