

## **The Historical Marker Program**

### **The Purpose of the Historical Marker Program**

The Dighton Historical Commission encourages property owners throughout the entire town of Dighton to note the historical and architectural significance of their properties and assists the owners in the process. These properties may include private as well as commercial and public buildings, churches, and sites that have historical significance. The Commission also works to encourage the preservation of these historically important places. Historical markers help educate the community and tourists about the town's history, serve to perpetuate the memory of significant person or event, increase architectural awareness, and preserve the town's character over the years. When community heritage thrives, so does the community itself. Not only will locals better appreciate their home, but they can show visitors why their area matters. The Dighton Historical Commission will award a historical marker to the applicant whose application has been approved.

### **Description and Cost of the Historical Marker**

The historical marker is oval in shape, 9 x 14, made with PVC, primed and painted with vinyl lettering. The color is maroon and the lettering is cream. The approximate cost of the marker is \$126 (plus tax and shipping) and will be paid by the applicant.

### **What information is included on the historical marker? How is that determined?**

The marker includes the historic name of the building and the date of its construction, or as close thereto as can be determined by research or reliable anecdotal report (e.g., family records). For a site, the date should be that of the historically significant event that occurred there, or, in the case of cemeteries, the date of the earliest marked grave.

The historical name is that of the original occupant or, if the original occupant was there only a few years, the first long-term occupant of the building, whether a private house or a commercial or public building. If there are two, or even three, long-term occupancies over time, then both or all those names will be used if possible (that is, if they fit in the available space). The important thing is for the names to be those most historically associated with a building over time.

We do not include the name of the current owner except in cases where the current owner is already a long-term occupant and would thereby qualify under the above criterion. Under no circumstances are markers altered to reflect later owners. The historical marker will also show "Dighton, Massachusetts" at the top portion and "Dighton Historical Commission" at the bottom portion. The marker will resemble that of the Winslow-Davis House (Dighton Historical Society):



*It is important to remember that the historical marker is assigned to a building, not awarded to a person or family, so the marker stays with the building even if the occupants change.*

### **What structures are eligible for the historical marker program?**

To participate in the program and obtain a marker for a home or other structure, property owners (applicants) are asked to ensure that the structure meets two or more of the criteria outlined below:

- Age: The home or structure is at least 100 years old (or less if determined by the Dighton Historical Commission to be historically significant).
- Historic Event: The structure or site is associated with one or more events in the life of a person or group who made a noteworthy contribution to local, regional or national history.
- Person(s): The site or building is associated with a person or group who made a noteworthy contribution to local, regional or national history, even if the names of those persons are no longer known. In the instance of unknown names of an individual or individuals, it is the contribution or connection to history that is being noted. A marker meeting this criterion might read, for example, "1865, Home of the Earliest Known Freed Slave in the Town of Dighton."
- Period/Style: The structure embodies distinctive characteristics of a particular architectural or construction style, including both the work of noted architects as well as unknown regional builders and craftsmen. Any old building will show some change over time, so we do not expect any property to be completely in its original

condition. It should, however, retain its original shape and roofline, and enough of its original exterior materials to reflect its original character and appearance. Critical features in this regard are masonry or frame wall material, windows, porches, and decorative details such as millwork or bracketing. Interior changes or additions to the rear are not considered in the marker evaluation unless they have an effect on the general view of the building that detracts from its historic character and appearance.

- Cultural Landscape/Archeology: The site demonstrates or, based on its history and/or geography, is likely to offer important information pertaining to local history. Such a marker might read, for example, “1758, Site of the Oldest Known Foundry in the Town of Dighton.”

In researching their properties, applicants are advised to consult the following sources:

- History of Dighton, Massachusetts by Helen H. Lane. Published by the Town of Dighton, 1962. – A copy of the book is available at the Dighton Public Library
- Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information Center (MACRIS)  
<http://mhcmacris.net/>
- Northern Bristol County Registry of Deeds <https://www.tauntondeeds.com/>
- Dighton Town Clerk <https://www.dighton-ma.gov/government/clerk.php>
- Dighton Historical Commission, Patricia Gailes, Chairman, 508 669-6431
- Dighton Historical Society <http://dightonhistoricalsociety.org/>
- Myrna Santos, Dighton Town Historian ([adrinktohealth@aol.com](mailto:adrinktohealth@aol.com))

## **How do I apply?**

Step 1: The owner simply needs to download and fill out all portions of the application form (see below). Hard copies of the application form will also be available at the Town Clerk. In addition to this form, the owner must include (1) a photograph of the front of the building (print or digital), and (2) a photocopy of the Inventory Form for the building, where available. Text that substantiates an owner’s claim of date or resident’s name(s) and contributions to the community should be highlighted in these supporting documents. Any additional research and references should be combined into a brief summary of significance and included in the application.

Step 2: Once complete, the owner should submit the application to the Dighton Historical Commission for review and approval, either by e-mail to [rafadello@gmail.com](mailto:rafadello@gmail.com), by U.S. mail, or by hand delivery to the Commission’s mail slot in Town Hall located at 979 Somerset Avenue.

*Application Deadline:* Marker applications must be completed and received by the Commission more than seven days prior to any meeting to be considered at that meeting. Applications received less than seven days prior to any meeting will be considered at the next general meeting. The Commission meets on the second Tuesday of every month.

Step 3: The Commission will review the complete application upon receipt, and discusses it as early as possible at a regularly scheduled monthly meeting. The Commission's review will focus on verification of the significance of the property, and of the accuracy and appropriateness of the requested text of the marker. It should be noted that Commission must approve the exact wording to be used on a marker in addition to approving the application itself. The Commission will provide altered wording of additional research suggests. The Commission may deny an application if it determines that the structure does not qualify, or if an application does not contain enough detail or explanation for the Commission to confirm the importance of the structure. An application may also be denied if the Commission deems the requested text to be inaccurate or inappropriate. In such cases, the Commission could ask the applicant for additional information or alternative text for the proposed marker.

Upon the Commission's approval of the marker application and separate approval of the wording to be used, the property owner will be notified and asked to contact the sign maker directly to arrange for the order, scheduling, and payment. (The Historical Commission will contact the sign maker independently to confirm approval and wording.) Payment (\$125) should be made to the sign maker; for an additional small fee mutually agreed upon by the owner and sign maker, the sign maker may be available to mount the marker to the structure's facade. If you have any questions about the program, eligibility, or application please contact the Program Coordinator, Rafa Delfin at [rafadello@gmail.com](mailto:rafadello@gmail.com)

NOTE: If you apply for a historical marker and your application is approved, you can choose to become a member of the Dighton Historical Society and your membership fee (\$10) during the first year will be waived.

(Updated: 8/8/2023)

## Application for Dighton Historical Marker

\*\*\*Please submit a copy of the earliest recorded deed, or comparable documentation (e.g. newspaper accounts, original tax records, or other reputable sources)

PLEASE PRINT:

For the structure at: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

For Marker: Original Owner's name (or original building name if business):  
\_\_\_\_\_

*If the name is very long, the Commission may need to discuss with you shortening it for the marker.*

For Marker: Year Built: \_\_\_\_\_ or circa year if date not recorded.

Alternate Name (if any) to appear on Marker: \_\_\_\_\_

Significance of alternate name: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Comments (please use additional sheet[s])

**For publicity, please check one:**

I consent to have my name, home, photos and information about my property featured by the Dighton Historical Commission in local/social media and related communications.

I do not consent to have my name home, photos and information about my property featured by the Dighton Historical Commission in local/social media and related communications.

APPLICANT SIGNATURE/DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*\*\*For and to mail in your completed application\*\*\**

Dighton Town Hall

ATTN: Dighton Historical Commission

979 Somerset Avenue Dighton, MA 02715

For Dighton Historical Commission Use: Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

CC to Applicant \_\_\_\_\_