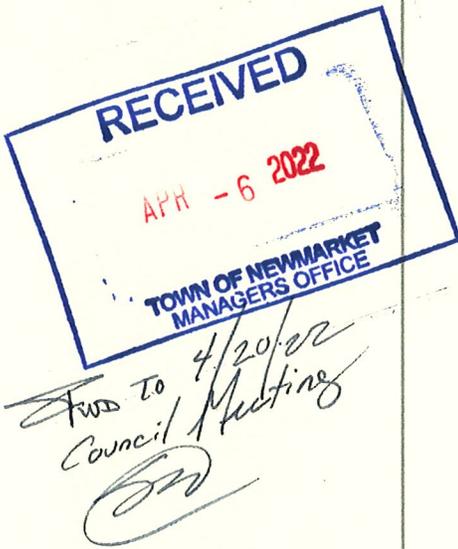




New Market Historical Society

[newmarketnhhistoricalsociety.org](http://newmarketnhhistoricalsociety.org)

John Carmichael, President  
44 Elm Street  
Newmarket, NH 03857  
603-659-3289  
[john.jcarmusa@gmail.com](mailto:john.jcarmusa@gmail.com)



*We are dedicated to increasing public understanding of, and enthusiasm for our local history and preservation. Our goals are to tell Newmarket's story, preserve its local artifacts, and sponsor historical events and educational opportunities.*

April 2, 2022

Dear Members of the Town Council and Planning Board,

First, a heartfelt thank you for all the work you each do to make Newmarket such an exceptional place to live, work and enjoy. We are all fortunate to call Newmarket home.

In our recent New Market Historical Society Board meeting, we discussed post-pandemic plans. One of these is our Downtown Walking Tour, with its narrated online audio. We have been researching many of the locations listed as part of Newmarket's Historic District and have unearthed a number of untold stories attached to them. With plans in the works to mark this path on the downtown pavement, there will be an increased focus on these buildings that truly tell a fuller story of our town's history.

We are writing this letter as we perceive a need to protect the charm of our nationally recognized historic district. In the late 1970s, the townspeople of Newmarket voted to create an historic district. An incredible amount of work was done to catalog the historical significance of over 100 buildings in the downtown area and become registered with the Department of the Interior as the Newmarket Industrial and Commercial Historic District. Furthermore, when the Historic District was initially proposed, every property owner was given a vote as to whether or not the district nomination should proceed, and the majority voted in favor of it.

We have within our Zoning Ordinance Section 32-161 an Historic Overlay District. The purpose of the historic overlay district is to *'protect and preserve cultural resources, particularly structures, buildings, and places of historic, architectural, and community value in an effort to promote a vibrant downtown, support existing and new business, conserve property values, foster economic development and revitalization, strengthen and expand the local economy and business community, and instill an appreciation of the town's cultural heritage and civic beauty for the education, pleasure, and general welfare of the citizens of Newmarket'*.

Over 40 years later, we have **not** adopted regulations to conserve these aesthetic and cultural assets. Historic districts attract visitors and commercial users; this in turn increases our tax base. While almost all building owners realize the value in preserving the historic integrity and harmony of the attractive district, some may have incongruous visions, or no long-term vision for their properties. In recent years, we have had numerous wonderful historic renovations, many of which far exceed any standards we might recommend. Unfortunately, there has also been a smattering of less harmonious construction. We are concerned that this trend may continue.

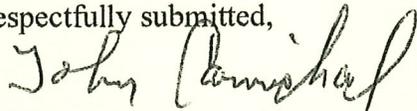
We recognize the Planning Board does have 'aesthetic review' authority when a project falls under Site Plan Review. However, if a project does not include a change or expansion of use, then no site plan review is required—and there is no aesthetic review. Having documented guidance would benefit all those involved in a project.

Roughly 15 years ago, the (now defunct) Newmarket Heritage Commission had proposed fairly comprehensive design regulations. In those economic times, the regulations were determined to be too burdensome for struggling property owners. Thankfully the vitality of the downtown has improved drastically; however, today's scenario is quite different: we are seeing more out-of-town investors purchasing and developing property here. There is no guarantee that such proprietors will honor the spirit of our historic district—even as there is growing public interest in protecting it.

The New Market Historical Society would like to see the Town formally adopt standards that would guide developers and property owners in preserving the integrity of our Historic District. Such standards are commonplace in communities with these districts. Even without the creation of an historic district (or heritage) commission, it would seem that with Zoning Ordinance Section 32-161 already in place, the appropriate standards could be added.

We look forward to continuing this conversation and discussing minimal regulations that would go a long way toward preserving the character of our historic district.

Respectfully submitted,



John Carmichael, President  
New Market Historical Society

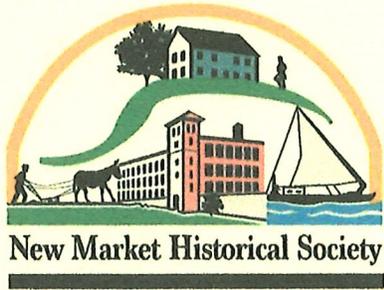
Cc: Steve Fournier, Town Manager  
Zoning Board of Adjustment  
Bart McDonough, Town Planner



Sheryl A Walker  
Donald Pelletier  
Barbara Pelletier  
Ray Dupre  
Mary Dosselt  
Sharon Dosselt  
ERIC BERGER  
Cathy Cantiga  
Linda Smith  
Meredith



John Carmichael  
my to  
John Bunker  
Henry M. Smith  
Lori Carmichael  
Jason Carmichael  
C Bauer  
Meredith A. Froot  
Doreen M. [unclear]



April 2, 2022  
Letter to Town Council & Planning Board

Signatures (continued)

Kathy Howcroft Taverine

Jennifer Torgersen

Sylvia von Delob

Lisa S. Houdt

Deeny