

VILLAGE OF BELLPORT HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

BROWNS LANE HISTORIC DISTRICT GUIDELINES

**Bellport Historic Preservation Commission
Incorporated Village of Bellport
29 Bellport Lane
Bellport, New York 11713
(631) 286-0327**

Adopted July 8, 2006

BROWNS LANE HISTORIC DISTRICT

HISTORY OF BROWNS LANE

Browns Lane is one of the oldest streets in Bellport and was in existence before the Bell brothers established the village. It is thought that it began as an early Native American trail to the bay. Through the first part of the 20th century it was called Rector Avenue after the Presbyterian parsonage that stood on Browns Lane opposite the Presbyterian church (now Methodist). It was connected to Bellport Lane by Front Street (now Shore Road), Bay Street (Pearl Street) and Hulse Street.

THE BROWNS LANE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Most of the houses on Browns Lane date from the third and fourth quarters of the 19th century with the houses on the east side above Maple Street mostly built by the firm of Robinson & Watkins. The most important hotels of Bellport's hotel era were located on this street: The Goldthwaite House stood facing the bay on the west side of Browns Lane between what is now Shore Road and Pearl Street and the Wyandotte Hotel was on the east side of the street, its entrance further north. In the first quarter of the 19th century Captain Joseph Marvin had a shipyard (that competed with Bell's Shipyard near Bellport Lane), at the foot of Browns Lane, and owned at least two houses on that lane. The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Bellport is located in a building that was formerly the summer home of Charles Bedford (Standard Oil) and others, built on land once owned by Captain Joseph Marvin.

Browns Lane is a street that is rich in history and architectural interest. This is another one of Bellport's jewels not only because of the way the street looks, a result of the spacing and scale of its buildings, but because it is essentially a time capsule in that most of the street is the same as it was a hundred years ago. Browns Lane, like Bellport Lane and Bell Street, defines Bellport in its own unique way and thus significantly contributes to a sense of place, rooted in history, which differentiates this remarkable village and makes it the immensely attractive place it is today.

PRESERVATION GOALS FOR THE BROWNS LANE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Maintaining and enhancing the elements that contribute to the over all setting.

Maintaining the open, semi-rural look of the streetscape.

Maintaining the architectural integrity of the present buildings, especially of the front facades and other components visible from the street, while accommodating special needs of particular residents whenever possible.

Accommodating additions and other changes to rear facades and in appropriate ways to side facades to allow the historic properties to be adapted to changing needs and lifestyle, while preserving the scale and proportion that make the lane uniquely pleasing to the eye.

The following section is descriptive, not prescriptive. It is a summary of what is already there. The Guidelines which follow the description are intended for use by residents or potential buyers who wish to create additions or updates to their homes. The hope is to replace subjectivity with the precept of Bellport preservation:

To use what is here now as a basis for what is inevitably to come.

DESCRIPTION: ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES DEFINING THE BROWNS LANE LOOK

It is the diversity of architectural styles in an open, broad setting that contributes greatly to the charm and uniqueness of Browns Lane. Architecture ranges from vernacular cottage to Colonial revival to Queen Anne to shingle cottage to modernist, yet there are some basic commonalities in the ensemble. Neat white fencing or privet hedges greet the eye. The open space on the west side of the street adds to the “country lane” appearance. Setbacks are fairly uniform, forming a pleasing building line running the length of the street, house placements toward the south end echoing the curve of the lane. The harbor vista at the foot of the lane and Bellport’s only surviving “widow’s walk” confirm the Village’s sea-faring New England roots.

Curb: The majority of the lane is devoid of curbing, with grass running directly to the road, emphasizing the country quality of the lane. Cement curbs mark short stretches along the church fronts and beside some storm drains.

Sidewalk: Public strips of lawn, sidewalks and trees appear along the length of the lane. Sidewalks are rustic oil-and-stone except near two churches where concrete and asphalt appear.

Bordering elements on the lane: Most of the 23 residences have white wooden picket fences common to Bellport and/or privet hedges. Picket fence style and hedge height vary.

Visibility: Nearly all houses are plainly visible as one strolls the lane. Swimming pools are not visible from the street.

Landscaping: All houses have grass, trees, bushes and foundation plantings, although species and designs vary widely.

Hardscaping: Driveways are commonly asphalt or oil plus stone. Brick is the predominant material for entrance walkways. Most houses are devoid of front yard hardscape items such as concrete urns, lampposts and street mailboxes.

Orientation: Nearly all houses are oriented with their front doors towards the lane.

Placement: Most houses are set back from the street with spacious rear and side yards.

House-lot relationship: Houses are all restrained in size relative to the space around them, which remains ample, reinforcing the open semi-rural look that is the most characteristic aspect of Browns Lane and contributes vitally to its unique grace and charm. Several houses have north or south hedges, demarking the borders of the lot.

House height: All houses are 2 or 2 1/2 stories high.

Entrances: Most entrances are through a veranda or small covered porch, with square piers or columns and gabled roofs. Half of the entrances are centered on the front of the house and half are to the side of the front of the house. Front doors appear to be wood, painted in various colors of green, or black.

House porches: Most houses have side porches or wraparound verandas.

Additions: Many houses have been added onto. Several additions are to the side of their wide lots, but most extensive expansion has been to the rear, virtually invisible to pedestrians in the lane.

Roofs: All houses have pitched roofs. Half of the houses sport gables facing the lane. Roof dormers appear on one-quarter of the houses. Most houses use asphalt roofing material of various shades of gray, black, brown and green.

Chimneys: Almost all the houses have one brick interior center chimney or one brick exterior side chimney.

Accessory buildings: Half of the houses have detached garages, and a few have detached guest cottages or other accessory buildings visible from the lane.

Gutters and Eaves: All houses have hung metal, vinyl or copper gutters.

Siding: Almost all houses have wood siding. Half of the houses have shingle style siding and the remaining have clapboard, board + batten and/or shiplap siding. The majority of house colors are white, off-white or natural shingle.

Windows: Virtually all lane-facing windows are double hung. A wide variation of multi-pane combinations exist but 2/2 panes are most common. Half of the houses have window shutters, of which most are old-style wood louvers rather than plastic. Shutters are painted in various shades of green, black, blue and white.

GENERAL ELEMENTS OF DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Bellport Historic Preservation Commission has three categories of project classifications for the construction and maintenance of residences in historic districts. These are: construction and maintenance that is exempted from Commission review; construction and maintenance projects that are reviewed on an expedited basis; and projects that require a Commission Hearing. Please refer to the classification guidelines available at the Bellport Village Office prior to commencing any construction or maintenance project.

The following guidelines are provided as suggested and recommended elements of general design for assisting applicants.

Element	Recommended	Not Recommended
Entrance Path	Brick, bluestone, stepping stones, slate.	Blacktop
Entrances	. Small covered porch, preferably with columns Wrap-around veranda	Flush entrance without covered entry or porch
Driveways	Oil-and-stone, Belgian block, subtle asphalt	Blacktop parking lot appearance
House Lot Relationship	Balance with neighbors. Open appearance, especially on sides	Crowding neighbors
House Orientation	Front door facing the lane	Main entrance and facade facing away from street
House shape	Straightforward quadratic overall shape	Arbitrary “statements” e.g. round, dome-like, etc.
House Size	In scale with property and neighbors	Overbuilt “McMansion” look

BHPC-E-4

House Covering	Clapboard, cedar shakes, shingles or modern materials resembling wood Historically appropriate or conservative color	Poor quality man-made materials
Garages	Whether attached or detached, subsidiary to house, recessed or side-facing	Oversized building out of scale or out of proportion with house
House Additions	To the back or perhaps the side, consistent with architectural style	Additions higher or larger than existing house Oversized dormers
Roofs	Pitched	Flat. Solar panels and skylights visible from street.
Roof materials	Dark colored dimensional shingle or cedar shakes	High impact colors
Chimneys	Functional brick	Wood framed chimney with metal flue
Eaves	Overhangs and details of construction and trim to match existing design	
Gutters	Discreet, blending to eaves, metal, wood or man-made	
Windows	Double hung, multi-paned, with muntin bars on the exterior and interior glass faces. Traditional frames with coordinating trim	Oversized windows, picture windows, oversized panes, trim less windows, tape "mullions"

BHPC-E-4

Shutters	Functional shutters mounted on proper hardware, in conservative colors	Plastic undersized nailed-on shutters
Entrance Doors	Panel door and/or louvered door, appropriate trim	Flimsy aluminum storm-and-screen doors
Mailboxes	Conventional shape and size	Decorative, exaggerated in design
Lawn	Maintained grass lawns	Gravel covered front yard
Plantings	Foundation plantings that do not overpower house or obscure windows	Dense plantings that conceal house
Hedges	Hedges pruned under 6 feet	Hedges that conceal house
Fences	Traditional white picket fences of wood construction or high-quality manmade materials	Visible plastic, chain-link or stockade fences
Sidewalk	Gravel, oil-and-stone sidewalks, consistent the length of the lane. Grass to road.	Blacktop. Concrete curbs
Exterior Lighting	Low-power, incandescent, non-glare, blending with environment	Glare onto neighbors. Obtrusive. "Airfield" lighting.

Rev. 1, 7/8/06, To end of third paragraph in PRESERVATION GOALS..., add: "while accommodating...whenever possible."