

## Morris County Heritage Commission Historical Marker Policy

*Historic structures, districts, and places with exceptional significance are eligible for county marker designation. The Commission may erect or alter a marker on its own initiative or respond to a local request according to the following principles:*

### **I. Unconditional Requirements**

1. The site must be open to the public and/or visible from the public way.
2. The site's designation must be approved by the representatives of the municipality's officially designated historical body, should such a body exist; if none exists, the designation should be approved by the municipal governing body.
3. The site's owner must give permission for the erection of a marker.
4. Sites that are no longer extant or are severely compromised will not be marked.
5. A site or event that affected two or more locations will only be marked with one marker at one location.
6. Sites already marked, signed, or otherwise designated will not be eligible for consideration for a Morris County Heritage Commission (MCHC) marker.
7. MCHC must approve the site's designation and have available funding. A MCHC representative must visit and approve the marker location before marker text is written.

### **II. Criteria**

*The Commission will consider these factors to determine eligibility for a marker. A site is not required to meet all the criteria to be eligible.*

1. The site is on, or eligible for placement on, the state or national register of historic places.
2. The site is significant to the history of Morris County.
3. The site:
  - a. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
  - b. Is associated with persons or groups whose lives were significant in our past.
  - c. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses exceptional artistic value.
4. The structure presents a reasonable level of historic integrity, retaining all or much of its original design, materials, and workmanship.

### **III. Procedure**

1. A Historical Marker Application form must be submitted to the Heritage Commission by the municipality's officially designated historical agency or governing body by July 31 for consideration within that calendar year. The application should be as complete as possible. It should include historical information with full citations to sources; should relate the site's eligibility to the criteria listed above, and should provide the most significant facts about the site in a brief list.
2. Staff and members of the Heritage Commission will assess the information, the integrity of the site, and the general suitability of the location for a marker.
3. The Heritage Commission will vote to approve placement of a marker and notify the applicant.
4. Applicants will be asked to help choose the marker's location. If the location under consideration is inaccessible to pedestrians, it should at least provide space for motorists to pull over safely. The municipal engineer or road department must approve marker locations in the public right of way.
5. After a site visit, the Heritage Commission will prepare marker text. Applicants will be given the opportunity to comment and request corrections. Upon agreement, the Commission will order the marker.
6. The Morris County Heritage Commission will then notify the Morris County Road Department to arrange for a mark-out of the area to ensure that no underground utility cables, lines or pipes exist in the vicinity. The Morris County Road Department will install the marker.
7. The Heritage Commission may invite applicants and interested residents and officials to participate in a ceremony after installation to promote public recognition of the historic site.
8. Whereas all historic markers are owned by the County of Morris and administered by the Morris County Heritage Commission, in the event that a marker must be replaced it shall be returned to the Morris County Heritage Commission for disposal.
9. The timeline from marker request to marker placement may be two or more years. The process includes funding, site approvals, research, text development, and approval, marker order, mark-out, and installation.