



TOWN OF RYE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION Guidelines for the Isles of Shoals



THE ISLES OF SHOALS

Several of the islands that make up the Isles of Shoals are designated as resources in the Rye Historic District including:

- **Lunging Island:** A privately-owned island that includes a Cape Cod Home - the property includes Square Rock Isle
- **Star Island:** The largest and most developed island, it includes several hotel and motel buildings, the Old Stone Chapel, conference buildings, a museum, artist studios, and support spaces
- **White Island:** Owned by the State of New Hampshire, it includes a Lighthouse and a Cape Cod Keeper's cottage
- **Seavey Island:** Owned by the State of New Hampshire, it is only an island at high tide when the sea separates it from White Island. There are no structures on the island, besides bird blinds. It is protected as home for sea terns by the Audubon Society.

These *Guidelines* were developed in conjunction with the Town of Rye's Historic District Commission (HDC). Please review this information during the early stages of planning a project. Familiarity with this material can assist in moving a project forward -saving both time and money. The Building Department is available for informal meetings with potential applicants who are considering improvements to their properties.

Guidelines and application information are available at the Rye Town Hall and on the Commission's website at www.town.rye.nh.us/historic-district-commission. For more information, to clarify whether a proposed project requires HDC review, or to obtain permit applications, please call the Building Department at (603) 964-9800.

HDC Review for the Isles of Shoals

As part of the Rye Historic District, exterior alterations on buildings and structures on the Isles of Shoals in Rye, New Hampshire are subject to review of the Rye Historic District Commission (HDC). Alterations on White Island and Seavey Island, owned by the State, are subject to review by both the HDC and the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources.

In its review of proposed work at the Isles of Shoals, the HDC will employ the *Town of Rye Historic District Guidelines* it uses in its review of all designated historic properties in its jurisdiction. However, understanding the infrastructure needs, the extreme weather conditions, and physical challenges, the HDC will apply greater consideration in its review to address the unique issues posed by life on the islands, in cooperation with the owners.



Gosport Chapel, built c. 1800, is located near the center of Star Island and remains essentially unchanged since its construction.

Star Island Preservation Zones



(Image courtesy of Goggle Earth.)

There are five Preservation Zones on Star Island:

Zone 1: Hotel Complex, Sports and Recreation, Early Cottages, and Victorian Cottages

Zone 2: Stone Chapel and Stone Village

Zone 3: Natural Areas

Zone 4: Staff and Support Services

Zone 5: Harbor Front

Preservation Zone Review

In an effort to streamline the historic preservation review process for proposed alterations on Star Island, the HDC has established a review process based upon the historical importance and distinct visual characteristics of the buildings and structures currently found on the island. From a preservation perspective, Star Island has five distinct zones at which different preservation approaches are recommended.

Zone 1: Hotel Complex, Sports and Recreation, Early Cottages, and Victorian Cottages

Zone 2: Stone Chapel and Stone Village

Zone 3: Natural Areas

Zone 4: Staff and Support Services

Zone 5: Harbor Front

From the HDC's perspective, the level of preservation rigor or development possibility varies by Zone and should be used as a guide as future alterations are considered.



The Hotel Complex visually dominates Zone 1.

Zone 1

Zone 1 includes the Hotel Complex and many of the earliest wood-framed buildings on Star Island. To maintain historic views, new construction in Zone 1 should be limited, particularly on the great lawn between the Hotel Complex and the pier. Select new construction to the rear of the Hotel Complex to support its continued operation would generally be appropriate under the following criteria:

- Wood framed construction with clapboards and gable roofs
- Maximum 2-stories in height
- 6/6 windows



Zone 1 includes support buildings south of the Hotel Complex.



The stone village and Chapel are in Zone 2.

Zone 2

Zone 2 is architecturally unique on the island and includes all of the buildings constructed of stone, including the Chapel. Unlike the wood framed buildings, those constructed in the stone village include chimneys, suggesting year-round rather than seasonal occupancy. Zone 2 is located at the center of the island, with limited visibility from the shoreline.

Additional construction would be possible under the following criteria:

- Random stone construction with gable roofs
- Maximum 1 1/2-stories in height, remaining below the height of the Chapel roof ridge
- 6/6 windows
- Stone chimneys



The Tucke Monument is a granite obelisk located in the natural areas at the southern end of Star Island in Zone 3.

Zone 3

Zone 3 represents the natural areas at the south end of the island. Zone 3 includes a cemetery, formal monuments, and the Art Barn to the northeast.

A solar power array was added in 2014.

Additional construction should be avoided in Zone 3.



Zone 4 includes support buildings are largely simple framed cottages.

Zone 4

Zone 4 represents the area of greatest potential development area on Star Island. In addition to some guest accommodations, much of the support functions are located in this Zone including staff services, an infirmary, a waste treatment area, storage sheds, a chicken coop, and a recently constructed dining hall adjacent to the tennis courts.

The buildings are largely wood framed, resting on piers, one to two stories in height, with gable roofs, some of which include chimneys. The following criteria should be used for new construction in Zone 4:

- Wood framed construction with exterior clapboards and gable roofs
- Maximum 2-stories in height
- 6/6 windows



Zone 4 also serves the utilitarian functions of the island such as the waste treatment facility and materials storage.



Zone 5 is the harbor front, and generally represents the area outside of the ring road at the north end of the island.

Zone 5

Zone 5 is generally an open landscape located between the water's edge and the ring road at the north end of the island. With the exception of the Summer House, some minor sheds, the pier, and a cemetery, Zone 5 largely represents the natural shoreline landscape.

Additional construction should be avoided in Zone 5.



The water's edge located behind the Hotel Complex is located in Zone 5.

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