

**Westport HDC Application Policy for Demolition Waiver of the full 180-Day Delay authorized by Chapter 14 of the Westport Town Ordinances for Structures larger than 500 square feet in size and over 50 years old.**

In the interest of fairly and equitably treating all applicants to the Westport Historic District Commission (“HDC”) for waiver of the automatic 180-day delay before a demolition permit may issue for structures over 500 square feet and over 50 years old, the HDC hereby clarifies its standard for consideration of granting such waiver pursuant to Sections 14-24 and 14-25 of the Town Ordinances.

- 1) The Commission must be convinced that the structure in question does not have significant remaining historic, architectural, or cultural characteristics that would warrant the consideration of alternative options to demolition. If the HDC does find that the structure in question reaches that standard of retaining significant features as noted above, it will file an objection with the Building Department as a party registered with the Building Official pursuant to Section 14-24, which would then cause the remainder of the 180-day demolition delay to continue pursuant to Section 14-25.
- 2) Arguments that are not considered in the above deliberations are:
  - a. Financial hardship
  - b. Owner/Contractor convenience
  - c. Pre-emptive statements by the owner that they will not seek alternatives to total demolition.
- 3) Exceptions to policy beyond the above policy are to be granted for matters of Public Safety.
  - a. Specifically, Section 14-27 of the Town Ordinances state that, “The provisions of this article shall not apply to orders issued by the Director of the Health District or the Building Official for emergency application because of a threat to public health and/or safety.”
- 4) Additional findings:
  - a. Adherence to the standard in (1) above should comport with the findings in the Westport Plan of Preservation as adopted.
  - b. Preservation of mid-century housing which is generally more modest in size and environmental impact helps ensure that the community will continue to have a diversity of housing stock available for those seeking to move into Westport and contribute to community sustainability.