Town of New Paltz Historic Preservation Commission
Code of Ethics for Commissioners

The Town of New Paltz Historic Preservation Commission was established by The Town government to promote the preservation and appropriate development of heritage resources.

This Code of Ethics is organized under three main categories:

- *Responsibility to the Community*
- *Responsibility to the Profession*
- *Standards of Professional Conduct*

Responsibility to the Community

1. Commissioners should be advocates for the community's heritage resources, striving to protect their integrity while recognizing the rights of citizens, individually and collectively, to their beneficial use and enjoyment.
2. Commissioners should promote public awareness, appreciation, access and support for the preservation of heritage resources.
3. Commissioners should develop standards and guidelines that are appropriate for the resources and protect the community's unique character, environment and quality of life.
4. Commissioners should respect the diversity of heritage resources that may hold different meanings for various groups and communities.
5. Commissioners should respect the public's right to know by providing full, clear and accurate information and observing both the letter and spirit of open meetings and open records laws.
6. Commissioners should provide opportunities for meaningful public participation in the work of the commission.
7. Commissioners should make timely, fair, informed and impartial decisions that guarantee citizens' rights to due process and equal protection under the law.
8. Commissioners should be sensitive to the interrelatedness of their decisions and the long-term implications for the resources and the community.
9. Commissioners should seek compromises or search for alternatives where neces-sary to achieve overall preservation goals and provide substantial justice for citizens.
10. Commissioners should recognize that the historic built environment changes over time and encourage new development that respects the historic character and fabric that preced-ed it.
11. Commissioners should continually evaluate and update their plans, ordinances, standards, guidelines and procedures to ensure they meet the community's current and future needs.
12. Commissioners should always strive to make decisions that are in the best interest of the community.

Responsibility to the Profession

1. Commissioners should be mindful that they are representatives of the greater local, state, and national preservation community and conduct themselves in a way that brings credit to their commission and the profession.
2. Commissioners should share their knowledge and experience and contribute to the development of other colleagues, particularly newly appointed commissioners, students, and interns.
3. Commissioners should actively promote heritage preservation and strive to in-crease the involvement of underrepresented groups.
4. Commissioners should support through their memberships and other contributions organizations that promote heritage preservation.
5. Commissioners should work collaboratively with related professionals and professional organizations whose actions also affect heritage conservation including, but not limited to, planners, code officials, architects, landscape architects, archaeologists, attorneys, realtors, and developers.
6. Commissioners should treat fairly and comment responsibly on the professional views of colleagues and members of other professions.
7. Commissioners should render all practicable assistance to other colleagues and organizations in an emergency when heritage resources are at risk.
8. Commissioners should acquire a depth of knowledge that will enable them to ex-plain to others the role of heritage preservation in a complex, modern world.
9. Commissioners should recognize that the field of heritage preservation is constantly evolving and actively pursue continuing educational opportunities in order to maintain refine and enhance their capabilities as practitioners.

Standards of Professional Conduct

1. Commissioners should thoroughly understand the legal framework of heritage preservation and consistently operate within the bounds of their authority and responsibility under the law.
2. Commissioners should treat all citizens and each other fairly, impartially and with respect, and refrain from discrimination or harassment of any kind.
3. Commissioners should not accept gifts or favors under any circumstances where it might appear that acceptance could influence their judgment.
4. Commissioners should disclose all personal or financial advantages that might accrue to them, their business interests or family members either directly or indirectly from a recommendation or decision.
5. Commissioners who have an actual or apparent conflict of interest in a matter coming before them should recuse themselves entirely from deliberations and decisions.
6. Commissioners are obligated to utilize their knowledge and experience to make decisions and therefore should abstain from participating and voting only in cases of a *bona fide* conflict of interest.
7. Commissioners should not disclose confidential information obtained in the course of their duties, except as required by the law, or use confidential information to further a personal interest.
8. Commissioners should not abuse their office by advancing an agenda that is not in the best interest of the community or heritage preservation.
9. Commissioners should seek the advice of colleagues or other professionals on matters that fall outside their expert knowledge or competence.

10. Commissioners should be consistent in their actions and recommendations, treating similarly situated properties similarly and providing clear explanations when different treatment is required.
11. Commissioners should reveal illegal conduct on the part of other commissioners, staff, officials, applicants or their representatives to an appropriate higher authority.
12. Commissioners should not participate in deliberations or decisions without adequate preparation and knowledge of the matter before them.
13. Commissioners should avoid dishonesty, never misrepresenting facts or distorting in-formation to achieve a desired outcome.
14. Commissioners should recognize the uniqueness of heritage properties, applying preservation theories, methods, and standards appropriate to each particular case.
15. Commissioners should be sensitive to ethical issues and ensure they are raised, critically analyzed, and addressed by the commission and other appropriate authorities.

This Code of Ethics was developed by members of the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (NAPC) and modified by the Town of New Paltz Historic Preservation Commission. The NAPC is the only organization devoted solely to representing the nation's preservation commissions. Its mission is "to build strong local preservation programs through education, advocacy and training." As part of that mission, the NAPC has developed a Code of Ethics guide to promote and maintain the highest standards of honesty, integrity and professionalism among the commissioners and staff who serve their communities through preservation commissions.

I have read and will adhere to the Town of New Paltz Historic Preservation Commission Code of Ethics for Commissioners.

John Orfitelli

Dawn Elliott

Susan DeMark

Kate Brodowska

Matt Maley

3/20/2019