



# New Jersey & National Registers of Historic Places

# FACTSHEET



State of New Jersey | Department of Environmental Protection | Historic Preservation Office

## What Is the National Register?

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the nation's historic resources worthy of preservation. The first historical registry was established by Congress in 1935 through passage of the Historic Sites Act. This act directed the Secretary of the Interior to designate properties of national importance as National Historic Landmarks. The 1966 National Historic Preservation Act (80 Stat. 915, as amended) established a National Register of Historic Places to include significant districts, sites, structures, buildings and objects of local, state and national interest. The 1966 act instructed the governor of each state to appoint a State Historic Preservation Officer to work in partnership with the U.S. Department of the Interior's National Register Office. For New Jersey, the State Historic Preservation Officer is the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection and the Historic Preservation Office constitutes her or his professional staff.



*Acorn Hall, Morristown, Morris County, 1853  
Credit: Historic Preservation Office Archives*

## What Is the New Jersey Register?

The New Jersey Register of Historic Places is the official list of New Jersey's historic resources of local, state and national interest. Created by the New Jersey Register of Historic Places Act of 1970 (N.J.S.A. 13:1B-15.128 et seq.), the New Jersey Register is closely modeled after the National Register Program. Both Registers have the same criteria for eligibility, nomination form and review process. Nearly every municipality in New Jersey has properties significant in architecture, history, archaeology, engineering and/or culture that are eligible for the New Jersey and National Registers. (N.J.S.A. 13:1B-15.128 et seq.)

## What Benefits Does Inclusion On the New Jersey & National Registers Offer?

The New Jersey and National Registers provide a degree of review and protection from public encroachment. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, provides for review of any federally licensed, financed or assisted undertaking for properties listed in, or eligible for listing in, the National Register. The New Jersey Register law requires review of any state, county or municipal undertaking involving properties listed in the New Jersey Register. These reviews are designed to prevent destruction or damage of historic resources by public agencies. Registered historic properties located in the Pinelands are automatically designated as "historic resources of significance" subject to review by the Pinelands Commission.

Inclusion in the National Register enables the owner of a property to take advantage of several financial benefits. The Tax Reform Act of 1986 permits owners and some lessees of historic buildings to take a 20



*Hinchliffe Stadium, Paterson City, Passaic County, 1932  
Photo Credit: Historic Preservation Office Archives*

percent income tax credit on the cost of rehabilitating such buildings for industrial, commercial or rental residential purposes. The rehabilitated building must be a certified historic structure that is subject to depreciation, and the rehabilitation must be certified as meeting standards established by the National Park Service. Furthermore, Historic Preservation Bond Fund matching grants and low-interest loans for rehabilitation and restoration are available to state, county and municipal agencies and qualified nonprofit organizations with properties listed on the New Jersey Register.

Property owners and county and local officials are notified and given an opportunity to comment, and a public meeting is held for historic districts. Applications

are then presented to the New Jersey State Review Board for Historic Sites, which comprises professionals in the fields of architecture, history, architectural history and archaeology. If passed by the State Review Board, the application is prepared for the State Historic Preservation Officer's signature. Once signed, the property is listed on the New Jersey Register and simultaneously recommended for the National Register. The nomination is then sent to Washington for consideration for the National Register.

## What If An Owner Objects To A Property Being Listed?

Listing in the New Jersey and National Registers does not place restrictions on private property owner rights. Within the limits of local municipal zoning laws, private property owners can do anything they wish with their property, provided no federal or state license, permit or funding is involved. If a private property owner (or a majority of private property owners in a historic district) objects to National Register listing by notarized letter to the State Historic Preservation Office, the nomination is sent to the National Register Office for a Determination of Eligibility, but the property is not listed on the National Register. A Determination of Eligibility provides for review previously, but tax benefits will not apply unless the property is actually listed in the National Register. If a private property owner (or a majority of owners in a historic district) objects to New Jersey Register listing by notarized letter to the State Historic Preservation Office, the property may still be listed in the New Jersey Register. However, the State Historic Preservation Officer will give thorough consideration to the owner's objections before making any decision.



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