

Fairport Village Partnership Façade Improvement Grant Program Guidelines

May 2006

(originally published 7/00, updated 5/06)

“Regardless of its age, a downtown building’s components help make it compatible with surrounding buildings and the entire block. The way the patterns of storefronts, upper facades and cornices repeat from one building to the next along a street gives the whole streetscape visual cohesiveness and creates a physical rhythm that provides orientation to pedestrians and motorists. Through this repeated pattern, the streetscape itself takes on design characteristics as distinctive as those of individual buildings.”

From

Revitalizing Downtown: The Professional Guide to the Main Street Approach

Façade Improvement Grant Program Guidelines

Purpose

The Fairport Village Partnership's mission is to assist leaders, businesses and the community achieve ongoing downtown district improvements that promote economic vitality, preserve the Village's canal-community character, and encourage a diversity of uses to meet the needs of residents and visitors.

The purpose of the Partnership's façade improvement program is to provide resources to help improve the aesthetic character of the Village's downtown buildings with a cumulative effect of revitalizing Main Street and the central business district.

A Design Review Committee, created by the Partnership, is responsible for oversight and approval of applications.

Requests for façade improvement grants may be up to \$7,500. In addition, grants toward the cost of architectural and design fees may be reimbursed. Reimbursement may not exceed 50% of the approved project cost. Matching requirements may include private funds from individual, privately-owned businesses, state and Federal funds, low-interest loans (available through the Village Industrial Development Agency), or several matching sources listed above.

Funds Availability

The Partnership's grants are a reimbursement program. Funds in advance of construction shall not be provided. To receive funds, an applicant (a building owner or tenant with owner permission) must submit a formal application to the Fairport Village Partnership. A completed application along with two (2) formal estimates for the project and supporting architectural drawings (if applicable) are required. *The Fairport Village Partnership will reimburse only those costs deemed to be reasonable and appropriate by the Design Review Committee to complete the proposed project. Personal labor of the applicant is not considered a legitimate project cost.*

In most cases, within thirty (30) days the applicant will be given notice from the Fairport Village Partnership as to whether or not their application has been approved. Successful applicants must document project expenditures and the required match to receive reimbursement. Generally, upon receipt of the appropriate documentation, payment will be made, often within two (2) weeks.

Eligible Projects

Priority will be given to façade restorations and signage improvements that are part of the Fairport Main Street Revitalization Program. A façade is defined as the principle or front elevation of a building. Individual proposals will be reviewed and may also be subject to review by the appropriate review boards in the Village of Fairport.

Eligible applicants for façade renovation and restoration grants include building owners or tenants (with owner permission) in Commercial and Industrial zoned areas, with a priority toward its location relative to North and South Main Street in the Village of Fairport.

Buildings in public view of Main Street, or those that are an integral part of Main Street, will be strongly considered.

Eligible Improvements

Grants must be utilized for any (or a combination) of the following:

- Painting
- New walls, siding, and repair of same
- New awnings
- Exterior storefront and/or storefront display lighting
- Cleaning and re-pointing of brick
- New signage
- Windows and window treatments
- Other areas on approval (such as landscaping with a qualified landscape plan)

All of the above façade improvements must follow the Design Guidelines, (which can be found in the Village Land Use and Design Report 2003). These are administered by the Fairport Village Partnership and its Design Review Committee to ensure compatibility with the existing downtown, helping create a streetscape that is attractive and functional. The façade renovation shall include the full building façade. Buildings with multiple retail stores are eligible for only one (1) façade grant. Larger, more extensive projects that meet the Design Review criteria may also be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Your design plan should meet several objectives:

Capitalize on the building's assets. A desirable design improvement plan will be consistent with a building's original architectural materials, its unique details and other existing features.

It should respect the relationship of storefront, upper façade and cornice. In cases where this relationship has been upset by the use on inappropriate materials, slipcovers, signs or other alterations, the incompatible elements should be removed. Any new modifications should re-establish this design.

The design should preserve as much of the original building character as possible. Once gone, a building's original fabric can never be replaced. Design improvements should preserve as much of the original material as possible. The "covering," such as vinyl siding, of a building's original façade is not encouraged.

Design Guidelines

Painting—The use of color throughout the commercial district should be harmonious. Paint colors must be chosen where they do not clash with surrounding buildings. Painting of soft masonry may be done to protect it from the elements. Separate paint colors for building walls and architectural details is encouraged, using no more than 3 (three) colors. The goal is to enhance and emphasize the architectural details of the building, not to suppress them.

New walls and siding, and repair of same—Use suitable materials that are compatible in texture, scale, and color with those already found in the downtown.

New awnings—As permitted by building code. Awnings should have coordinating colors to complement building facades and details. Architectural details must not be removed to install awnings. Canvas awnings are strongly recommended.

Exterior Storefront and/or Storefront Display Lighting—Should follow local lighting ordinances. Fixtures must not cover architectural details and should be compatible with the existing structure in scale and design. Lighting must not emanate more light than is necessary to illuminate a sign or storefront. Lights must face the façade and bulbs must be shielded from the street.

Cleaning of the Building Façade—Appropriate cleaning techniques should be utilized that will not mar building facades or contribute to future decay. For example, sandblasting a brick surface exposes the softer masonry inside to moisture and wind damage and is discouraged.

New Signage—Must follow local sign codes, or receive proper variance from the Village. Use coordinating colors to complement building façade and details, as well as appropriately sized to fit the scale of the building. New signage must not cover any significant architectural details. Exterior box-type backlit, moving, flashing or neon signs and awnings are discouraged, except when part of a structure's original architectural design. Details about the business must be reserved for smaller window signs (i.e. hours of operation), while the business name and some immediate relevant information should be displayed on the primary sign.

Windows and Window Treatments—Must be consistent with the scale and design of structure. Replacement windows must be historically accurate in design and relationship to the structure.

Other Areas—On approval, other areas may be considered that are not mentioned here. These must follow the published Design Guidelines.

Primary Project Review Criteria

- Project is consistent with the Fairport Village Partnership mission, goals and objectives, the Village of Fairport's Comprehensive Plan, Land Use and Design Report and the Canal Revitalization Plans.
- Structure has a commercial use.
- Project has an additional investment plan.
- Project will result in new or expanded business and/or jobs; will build the Village business climate and enhance business opportunity in the Village.
- The degree to which the improvement capitalizes on the building's architectural assets.
- The project demonstrates collaboration and partnership.
- State or National register eligible.
- Positive aesthetic effect of the renovation on the character of Main Street.
- Other building improvements planned beyond those that are Partnership funded.

Additional Project Review Criteria

Priority will also be given to the following:

- Buildings where an immediate renovation will stop serious deterioration of the building's façade.
- Historic properties in danger of being lost, in part or in total, to disrepair. This may include properties listed in the State and/or National Registers of Historic Places, or properties with historical, architectural or cultural significance.
- Buildings where historic or architecturally significant features contributing to the building's character are in danger of being lost due to disrepair.
- Unoccupied properties where façade improvements would reduce the perception of downtown decay.

Compliance with Applicable Laws

Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity

The Fairport Village Partnership is committed to programs of Affirmative Action. Article 15A of the Executive Law pertains to Minority and Women-owned business enterprises, and Equal Employment Opportunity.

Local Purchasing

Where possible and practical, the Fairport Village Partnership encourages the use of local contractors, professionals, vendors and suppliers for approved renovation projects.

Environmental Review

Prior to grant approval, all requirements of State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) shall be met (where applicable).

Historic Review

Any project that involves a building that is listed in the State/National Register must conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. Approval of the scope of the proposed work by the New York State Historic Preservation Office is required for all structures on the State/National Register.

Building Code Requirements

All projects must comply with the Uniform Fire and Prevention Code and Building Code, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. A letter from the Building Inspector stating that such conditions have been met should accompany the application.

Letter of Agreement

Once the Fairport Village Partnership concludes that the proposed project meets its program guidelines, a letter of agreement (attached) needs to be signed by the applicant. Final construction documents will require Partnership review before work can begin, including a construction schedule.

Review Process, Recapture Policy, Application Instructions

Contact the Partnership staff to verify that your project location and scope of improvements are eligible. Staff can help you determine eligibility; however, the Design Review Committee makes the final decision on grant awards. Upon completion of the project, a site visit will be made to ensure that the project and information submitted accurately reflects the work done.

In addition, the following recapture policy is in effect, and grant money awarded to either a tenant or landlord is contingent upon the following condition:

- (1) The premises remains occupied by the tenant identified at the time of application for no less than two years from the date of the grant award. Decisions are made based on the information provided in the application, and should that information change, it is the responsibility of the applicant to inform the Partnership in a timely manner, or risk losing all or part of the grant monies.
- (2) Should the applicant fail to occupy the premises and/or leave during the application process, or within two-year recapture time frame, the applicant is subject to forfeiture on all or part of the grant award.

Please review the following pages to ensure that your grant application is submitted correctly. Following the guidelines below will also help.

Completed applications must include the following (please use this checklist to be certain your project has all the necessary requirements):

Completed application form—A completed form, including a description of your project, full name, address and business. The description should be as vivid as possible and include details. For example, if you are replacing windows, what style will they be replaced with? If you are painting, what will the primary color be? What color will the trim be? If you wish to purchase an awning, what type, color and design? If checking the “other” box, be specific and clear about your project—do not leave blank.

Cost Estimates—Applicants are required to obtain two cost estimates from separate contractors or vendors regardless of what is to be purchased or what work is to be accomplished. For both cost estimates #1 and #2: estimates must be on a contractor or vendors letterhead or invoice, signed by the contractor or vendor.

Additional Materials—Include photographs if you are applying for sign improvement. Include fabric swatches if you are applying for an awning. Provide sample catalogue cut sheets and color palettes for doors, windows and other materials. Architectural plans, design sketches or site plans may be required as appropriate.

The Review Process

1. Submit a formal application to the Fairport Village Partnership, 6 N. Main Street, Suite 105, Fairport, New York 14450. Be sure to include all of the materials referred to in the above checklist, or your application may be returned incomplete.
2. You will be notified of the Design Review Committee's decision within 30 days of receipt of a completed application.
3. The grant money is determined by taking 50% of the lowest cost estimate. This amount will be the maximum amount that you will be awarded under the program. If 50% of the final project cost is more than the maximum amount, the grant will be reduced to 50% of the final project cost.
4. Once construction begins, project completion is required within 90 days. Extensions may be considered. It is the responsibility of the applicant to inform the Partnership of delays and/or changes to the project.
5. A Fairport Village Partnership façade improvement banner will be provided to you for display during project work, and for at least a two month period after completion of the project.
6. Any changes to the project scope **must** be reviewed and approved by the Design Review Committee or the applicant risks losing grant monies.
7. Once a project is completed, proof of payment must be submitted to the Partnership. This should be in the form of an invoice or receipt that includes the final cost of the project, the work that was done or products purchased, and signed by the contractor or vendor acknowledging that the project has been paid in full. Photographs of the completed project should also be submitted.
8. A Fairport Village Partnership representative will perform a site visit and verify and review the project for completeness, quality of work, to ensure that the work proposed was the work done.
9. The applicant will be sent a reimbursement check within 30 days from the date of completion.

Fairport Village Partnership
6 N. Main Street, Suite 105
Fairport, New York 14450
585-377-6010

Fairport Village Partnership
Façade Improvement Grant Program
Application

Applicant Information

Date _____

Name _____

Relationship to Project _____

Business Address _____

Business Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

Project Information

Business Name _____

Business Type _____ *(restaurant, office, retail)*

Building Owner _____

(if other than applicant, consent required)

Type of Project

Façade Renovation (please check)

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Storefront lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> New Signage | <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning/Repointing Brick |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Awning | <input type="checkbox"/> Walls/Siding | <input type="checkbox"/> New Windows or Doors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Painting | <input type="checkbox"/> New Glass | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Areas (specify): |

Brief Description of Project

**Attach architectural plans, design sketches, site plans, photographs; catalogue cut sheets, color palettes, and examples.

Estimated cost of project \$ _____

Two estimates attached? Yes No

Project start date _____ Project completion date _____