



Presbytery of Newton Historic Grant Policy

Purpose

1. The decision of whether or not a church applies for an historic grant from a local municipality, historical society or county in order to update, repair or build onto the church property can be complex. Numerous factors ought to be considered before submitting an application. Newton Presbytery wants to partner with you in this decision-making process.

Rationale

- The property of a congregation is a tool for the accomplishment of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world (Book of Order, G-4.0201).
- The preservation of truly historic church properties provides a valuable legacy for future generations. Repair and/or restoration should not be the primary reason for applying for historic grants.
- The PC(USA) is a connectional church. As such, each individual congregation holds their property in trust for the sake of the whole church. The Presbytery, as the local representation of the whole church, provides accountability, resources, support, and wisdom for a congregation in their efforts to be good stewards of this valuable resource for ministry.
- Congregations are required to obtain written permission of the Presbytery in order to sell, lease, or encumber any of their property (Book of Order, G-4.0206).

Process *(in chronological order)*

1. Contact the Trustees of Newton Presbytery when first considering applying for an historic grant. This initial contact shall occur prior to preparing an historic grant application.
2. Accurately determine the requirements of the grantor with respect to the church's property, including easements, signage, historic registry, and bylaw changes. The congregation must ensure that they will not give up any religious freedoms or property control upon acceptance of the historic grant. Any encumbrance to the church's property must be disclosed.
3. Meet with the historic grant subgroup of the Trustees to engage in discussion about the purpose of the grant. The discussion will cover issues of church preservation, what constitutes a historic property, ramifications of a historic designation for a church, and the church's reasoning in applying for an historic grant. The subgroup will report to the Trustees and make a recommendation as to the approval of the historic grant.
4. After Trustee approval, obtain session and congregational approval for pursuing the historic grant.
5. It is recommended that an experienced grant writer be utilized in preparing the application. The application must note that approval by Newton Presbytery, on behalf of the whole church, is required before the historic grant is accepted.
6. Submit the application to the Trustees so they may ensure the application is accurate and determine whether it is ready for final approval.
7. Submit the approved application to the entity from which the historic grant is being requested.
8. Monitor the process throughout so that no other privileges or hindrances are given to the church in return for the historic grant.
9. Notify the Trustees both when the historic grant has been received and when the work for which the grant has been obtained has begun and when it is completed.