**TOWN OF GIBRALTAR**
**ORDINANCE NO. 2025-02**
**ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN STANDARDS**

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**Ordinance 2025-02 shall repeal and replace any previous ordinance(s) in whole or part, or any other ordinances that contradict this new Ordinance.**

The Town Board of Gibraltar, in the County of Door, State of Wisconsin, does hereby ordain as follows:

**Purpose**

To promote the orderly development and redevelopment of the built environment in a manner that preserves and enhances the historical, rural, and small-town character of the Town of Gibraltar and to protect the aesthetic integrity and cultural identity of the Town. The standards are intended to guide development in a way that balances individual expression with community values, ensuring that new construction, renovations, and additions are compatible with the Town's historic character.

**State Statutes Adopted – Authority**

The Board of Supervisors of the Town of Gibraltar is granted authority for adopting this Ordinance under its general powers under §60.10(2)(c) and 60.22(3), Wisconsin Statutes. The Town Board Adopts this Ordinance under its general village powers authority and §66.1014 of the Wisconsin Statutes, 2917 Act 59.

**Background**

In 2023, the Town of Gibraltar adopted its 2023-2043 Comprehensive Plan as obligated by State Statute (Wis. Stats. 66.1001). The long-range plan reflects the community's shared vision and priorities for the future of the Town and is meant to guide the Town's decision-making in shaping that vision. These Architectural Design Standards are meant to contribute to the fulfillment of the Town of Gibraltar's Comprehensive Plan, 2023-2043 - Goal 2.1: The historical character of the Town's small communities, Fish Creek, Juddville and Maple Grove and its outlying areas are preserved for its residents, visitors and future generations.

**Intent**

The architectural design standards are intended to protect and preserve the small-town historical character of Fish Creek that gives residents a sense of belonging, draws visitors back again and again, and keeps small businesses thriving in the heart of its downtown. These architectural design standards, along with your own creativity and/or that of your chosen designer, are meant to give your building, business or home, its own personality while complementing the overall historical character of the Town.

**Note: Consultation with the local Gibraltar Historical Association is recommended for any building that may have historical value.**

These standards are encouraged through the entire Town of Gibraltar. However, they are required in the following locations as depicted on the attached map (Attachment A):

**Locations Where Standards are Required**

- Both sides of Main Street from the intersection of Hwy 42, west to the water's edge at Sunset Park.
- Both sides of Highway 42 from and including 3970 Highway 42 west to and including 9405 Highway 42 and including Founders Square.
- Both sides of Cottage Row from Ula Street & Spruce Street to the intersection with Cottage Row Court.
- Both sides of Hill Street, Bluff Lane, Spruce Street, Maple Street, Cedar Street, Cedar Court, Ula Street, Evergreen Street, and Cottage Row Court.

**Architectural Design Standards to Preserve the Character of Fish Creek**

The following architectural design standards are meant to be used for new construction, rebuilds, and the remodeling or rehabilitation of commercial or residential buildings.

**Size/Scale** – Should be consistent with the buildings in attached Figure 1A.

**Roof Style** – Gabled, multi-gabled, or hip with or without dormers. False fronts along the roof edge should only be used for rebuilds or to replace an existing roof of the same style.

**Roof Materials** – Wood, asphalt, or standing seam. Additionally, metal is allowed as an accent or for hidden areas behind a false front.

**Exterior Siding Materials** – Wood, engineered wood, fiber cement products, or any material consistent with the historic or architectural aesthetic of the area. Materials must visually resemble clapboard. No vertical metal siding is permitted.

**Exterior Masonry Materials** – Natural local dolomite stone, granite, or stone-like products consistent with the historic or architectural aesthetic of the area.

**Exterior Color** – Exterior colors should be in neutral tones. Acceptable colors include white, light beige, taupe, gray, cream, and other muted or natural shades that complement the surrounding environment and are consistent with the historic or architectural aesthetic of the area. Black can be used for accents on trims or shutters. Matte finishes only. No patterns. Any change to an exterior building color other than the current color, original color, or white requires Gibraltar Plan Commission review and approval as outlined under the Minor Work Exemptions section.

**Windows** – Single or multiple panes. No more than 30% glass on the street side of the building. Shutters can be used as an accent.

**Doors/Entryways** – Should complement other architectural features. A roof over an entryway is encouraged. No sliding patio door or garage door entryways on the street side of the building unless for motorized vehicle garage usage.

**Porches** – If added, porches should be covered and consistent with the historic or architectural aesthetic of the area and complement other architectural features. "Other architectural features" refers to elements like the overall style, material choices, and design elements that are consistent with the historic or architectural aesthetic of the area. No uncovered decks allowed on the street-side of the building.

**Balconies, Towers, or Cupolas** – If added, should complement other architectural features. "Other architectural features" refers to elements like the overall style, material choices, and design elements that are consistent with the historic or architectural aesthetic of the area. Any glass will count toward the 30% glass on the street side of the building.

**Stairways** – No outside stairways to a second floor on the roadside of a building.

**Exterior Lighting** – Warm, low level, downcast, and controlled. Use of Dark Sky lighting standards are required. See attached Figure 2A.

**Design Review Process**

1. **Approval of Compliance Application**

   Before beginning any type of exterior construction, alteration, or demolition work within the Fish Creek design standards district, an application for a certificate of compliance must be submitted and approved by the Town of Gibraltar Planning Commission. This includes changes in exterior building color if the proposed new color differs from the existing color, original color, or white. Failure to gain such approval or commencing work before approval can result in enforcement action. A $100 application fee shall accompany each Certificate of Compliance application.

   *A certificate of compliance document is a document certifying that a project within the identified Fish Creek Design Standards district meets the standards outlined in Town of Gibraltar ordinances of design standards. Building permits will not be issued within the district without Gibraltar Planning Commission review and approval.

2. **Review and Meeting Process**

   a. Upon receiving an application for a certificate of compliance (GPC) Gibraltar Planning Commission will review the application materials to ensure that:
   *Adequate information has been submitted to evaluate the proposal
   *It complies with all Town ordinances and codes
   *It is consistent with the Design Standards outlined in this document.
   *It meets the requirements in the attached Design Standards Compliance Checklist (Attachment B.)

   b. Once the application is completed and the necessary materials are provided, the Gibraltar Planning Commission will hold a review hearing at the next regularly scheduled monthly meeting.

   c. If an applicant requests review at a special Plan Commission meeting outside the regularly scheduled monthly Plan Commission meeting, an additional special meeting fee may apply.

**Minor Work Exemptions**

Ordinary maintenance and repair will be exempt from design standards application and review if the maintenance or repair is identified as one or more of the exemptions listed.

* Repainting the same color, original color or white. Repainting using the existing color, original color, or white is considered a minor work exemption and does not require review. However, any proposed change to an exterior building color other than the current color, original color, or white shall be subject to review and approval by the Gibraltar Plan Commission. The proposed color must comply with the Exterior Color standards outlined in this Ordinance and be approved as part of the Design Standards compliance process.

* Replacement of window glass

* Installation of temporary mechanical equipment (such as a window air condition unit).

* Minor landscape, including vegetable and flower gardens, shrubbery, and tree planting

* Pruning of trees and shrubbery

* Removal of shrubbery

* Repairs to walks, patios, fences and driveways if replacement materials match the existing materials

* Replacement of small amounts of missing or deteriorated trim, siding, roof shingles, porch flooring, steps if replacement materials match the existing.

* Repainting or other masonry repairs if the replacement materials match the existing materials.

* Installation of storm windows and doors if no trim or molding is removed.

* Installation or replacement of gutters and downspouts if no trim or molding is removed.

* New roof coverings as long as the material and color match the existing roof

**Major Work**

1. In general, these are items which involve a substantial change in the appearance of a building and will require an application and a review process.
   - Demolition and rebuilding
   - Complete remodel
   - New construction
   - Any change to the exterior building color that differs from the current, original, or white color and is therefore subject to Plan Commission review under the Design Standards

2. Completed certificate of Compliance (COC) applications and all supporting materials must be submitted to Town of Gibraltar Planning Commission via Town offices and staff 15 business days prior to the next GPC full commission meeting.

   a. Staff will review the applications to ensure they are complete and provide notification of the public hearing to all property owners within 300 feet of the proposed site.

   b. The applicant will appear before the Commission at the assigned monthly meeting.

   c. The GPC may approve, deny, or suggest modifications to an application to make it acceptable. Hearings may be continued at another meeting if information is required to make a determination. Work may not proceed until the owner has an approved (COC)

**How Applications are Evaluated**

1. State and local laws give the Town of Gibraltar clear direction on how projects are to be evaluated. Under Town of Gibraltar Town Board Direction, the GPC is charged with developing specific policies dealing with issues related to projects within the Fish Creek Design Standards District. The Town Board appoints full time resident members of the Gibraltar Planning Commission (GPC) who serve 3-year terms.

2. In evaluating a project proposal, the GPC refers to the adopted design standards in this document and utilizes the attached Design Standards Compliance Checklist (Attachment B).

3. The standards in this Ordinance are designed to address the more common issues that come before the Commission. The GPC also recognizes that each property in the Fish Creek design standards district has unique qualities and there are sometimes circumstances that warrant exceptions to the adopted standards and policies. It is the responsibility of a property owner to demonstrate to the Commission that an exemption is justified.

4. In order for the Commission to deny an application for a COC the Commission must find that the proposed project violates one or more of the design standards.

**Appeals Process**

1. An aggrieved party may appeal the GPC decision to the Gibraltar Town Board within 30 days after the GPC decision. The responsibility of the Gibraltar Town Board is to hear and decide appeals from any order, decision, requirement, or interpretation made by the GPC. Once the appeal is filed it is the responsibility of the GPC and Town staff to forward all papers related to the action to the Gibraltar Town Board. The Town Board will hold a hearing based on the evidence presented at the GPC. **No new evidence may be presented.** If an appellant requests review at a special Town Board meeting outside the regularly scheduled monthly Town Board meeting, an additional special meeting fee may apply.

2. The Gibraltar Town Board will affirm the Planning Commission Decision, deny or remand it back for further review of the GPC.

**Enforcement/Fines**

1. **Failure to Comply**

The Town of Gibraltar reserves the right to charge penalties for failing to obtain a certificate, starting before, or without approval of any Major work projects located in the Design Standards District. Any work to be completed must be presented to the GPC and become approved before any work commences. This includes failure to obtain a Certificate of Compliance for any exterior building color change that differs from the current, original, or white color. Such color changes are subject to review and approval by the GPC. Performing this type of work without prior approval constitutes a violation of this Ordinance and will be subject to the same enforcement measures and penalties as other unauthorized major work.

Any person, partnership, corporation, limited liability company, or other legal entity that fails to comply with the provisions of this Ordinance, upon conviction will pay a forfeiture of not less than $100.00 and not more than $500.00 to be set by the Town Board and recorded on the Town of Gibraltar fee and forfeiture schedule. Together with the costs of prosecution and in rueful default of payment of such forfeiture and cost of prosecution, shall be imprisoned in the County jail until said forfeiture is paid, but not exceeding 60 days. Continued noncompliance will result in continued fines daily until remedies have been met.

Penalties set forth in this section shall be in addition to all other remedies of injunction, abatement, or costs, whether existing under this Ordinance or otherwise.

Any violations of any of the sub-sections of this Ordinance may stipulate guilt or no contest and may pay the Town Clerk. Such payment will make it unnecessary for the subject charged to appear in court and will act as a basis for the court to enter a judgment and order forfeiture of the bond. Forfeitures, penalty assessments, costs and fees shall be disbursed as provided in Wisconsin Statutes, Section 66.12

2. **Permit and fee schedule.** The fines and forfeitures established by the Town of Gibraltar Board of Supervisors shall correlate with the administrative and related costs involved in the compliance monitoring. A schedule of fees is available for review on the Town website.

3. **Enforcement**

a. The Town of Gibraltar Police Department, or designee shall be the established enforcement structure for issuance of any warnings, notifications or forfeitures.

b. The Town of Gibraltar has an established Planning Commission that reviews complaints, notifications, and forfeitures that have been issued against an owner. The Planning Commission is granted authority to review and notify any owner of any decision against the owner. The GPC will report all activities and actions to the Gibraltar Town Board.

c. An applicant may request an appeal of a GPC decision; however, such appeals will be heard at the sole discretion of the Town Board.
*The goal is to incentivize compliance with the appropriate fees and fines but not be unduly burdensome or so that it prevents users from participating in the enforcement and

regulatory process. Additionally, it is not the intent of the Town Board or the Gibraltar Planning Commission to be overburdensome to the owners inside the district but work with them to become compliant.

**Severability**

If any portion of this Ordinance is declared invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such a decision shall not affect the validity of any other provisions in this Ordinance.

Originally adopted by the Town Board of Gibraltar on May 14, 2025.

Amended by the Town Board of Gibraltar on July 9, 2025.

Amended this 2nd day of September, 2026.

Steven Sohns Town Chairman _____

Jayson Merkel Supervisor _____

Tom Birmingham Supervisor _____

John Selenica Supervisor _____

Vinni Hancock Supervisor Absent

Approved: AYE 4 NAY 0

Attested:

Laura Reetz
Town of Gibraltar Clerk _____

# Fish Creek Historic Sites

*Guided and Audio Tours Available in Fish Creek*


Alexander's Noble House Museum • 1875


Eagle Bluff Lighthouse • 1868


Gibraltar's Old Town Hall 1880


Asa Thorp's Cabin • 1849

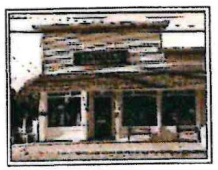

Chambers Island Lighthouse 1868


Church of Atonement • 1876


Sunshine & Company • 1850


True North • 1892


Lundberg Home • 1890


On Deck • 1881


Fish Creek Market • 1890


White Gull Inn • 1896


Holiday Harbor • 1914


Ellman House • 1899

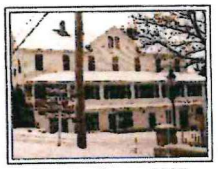

Fred & Co. • 1900


Hide Side Boutique • 1900


Spruce • 1900


Thorp House Inn • 1902


Sailor Sam's • 1900


Whistling Swan • 1907

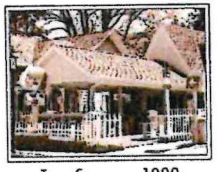

Juniper's Gin Joint • 1900's


Barringer's • 1910


Community Church • 1917

For Complete Information Pick Up Your User Friendly Brochure
at the Fish Creek Visitor Center or visit the website
**www.historicnoble.org**

920.868.2091 | noblehousefc@gmail.com


Taco Cerveza • 1932


Schreiber's Property • 1932

FIGURE 1A

## *Goals*

1. *To improve safety by reducing glare*
2. *To save energy by reducing consumption*
3. *To ensure privacy by reducing light trespass*
4. *To preserve the night sky by reducing sky glow*

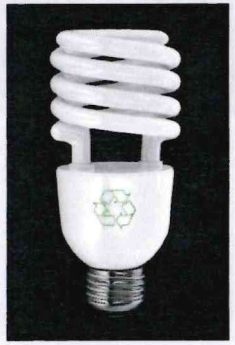


**Town of Gibraltar**

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**Town of Gibraltar**

# Best Lighting Practices



**Tel: (920) 868-1714**

FIGURE 2A

# Best Lighting Practices

To accomplish these goals all outdoor lighting both public and private would ideally:

1. be fully shielded so that all light emitted by the fixture would be projected below the horizontal plane for the purpose of reducing glare, light trespass and sky glow.
2. Use energy efficient lamps such as metal halide (MH), high & low pressure sodium (HPS)(LPS) and use the lowest wattage possible for the purpose intended for the purpose of reducing energy consumption
3. Be downcast for the purpose of reducing glare, light trespass and sky glow
4. Be designed, located, installed and directed to maximize the efficiency of the lighting while reducing glare, light trespass and sky glow

## Other Recommendations

Sign Lighting: Refer to the Town of Gibraltar Sign Ordinance

Decorative Lighting: Lights should not flash, blink, chase or otherwise be in motion

Canopy Lighting: Lamps and diffusers would be recessed and not extended below the surface of the canopy

Flag Lighting: Ideally flags would be retired at sunset. If you choose to fly your flag after dark, the following methods would meet the goals list above:

1. Downcast lighting fixtures mounted on top of the pole
2. A light fixture on the ground directly below the flagpole or on the pole some distance up with the cone of the light being confined to the circumference of the flag.
3. Lowest wattage light that adequately illuminates the flag would be the best choice to save energy.

Exceptions to these best practices :

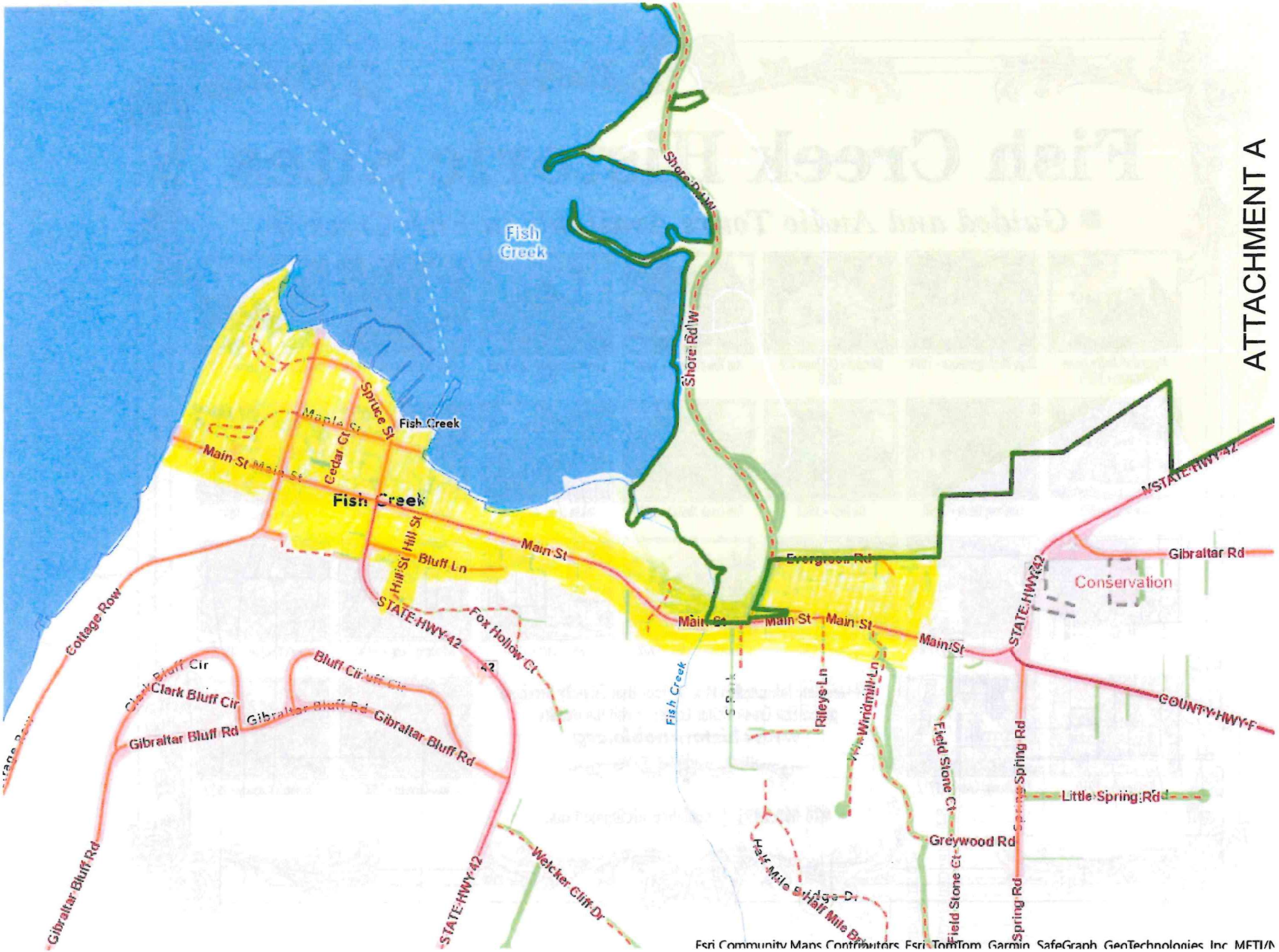
- Navigational lighting
- State & County highway lighting
- Communications towers



**Town of Gibraltar**
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www.townofgibraltar.com

ATTACHMENT A



# Design Standards Compliance checklist

**Size / Scale**

Is the proposed building consistent with other Town of Gibraltar historical buildings or consistent with the downtown vision? Yes_____ No _____

Is the proposed building conforming to all setbacks, zoning, and consistent with the Towns Comprehensive Plan identified on the submitted site plan Yes____ No____

**Roof Style**

Is the proposed roof design compliant with the design standards Yes _____ No _____

**Roof Materials**

Are the proposed materials compliant with the design standards Yes _____ No _____

Is the proposed color consistent with the design standards Yes____N0____

**Exterior Siding Materials**

Are the proposed siding materials compliant with design standards Yes ____ No _____

Is the proposed color(s) compliant with design standards Yes____ No_____

**Exterior Masonry Materials**

Are proposed Masonry products compliant with design standards Yes ____ No _____

Are the proposed color compliant with the design standards Yes____ No_____

**Windows**

Does the proposed plan meet 30% glass requirements Yes _____ No _____

**Doors / Entryway**

Do entry doors on road face meet design standards Yes_____ No _____

Do the Garage door(s) comply in color and style with design standards Yes____No____

**Porches**

Are proposed porches compliant with design standards Yes _____ No _____

**Balconies, Towers, Cupolas**

If applicable are proposed balconies, towers, or cupolas compliment the downtown district, and consistent with glass requirements Yes_____ No _____

**Stairways**

Is there a proposed outside stairway? Yes ____ No ____ if yes is the proposed stairway not on the road face and designed to fit design standards compliance Yes ____ No ____

**Exterior Lighting**

Is the submitted exterior lighting plan compliant with dark sky standards Yes ____ No ____

*note* Exterior lighting will be inspected during the final Building inspection, occupancy will not be granted until this is completed, the inspection will include a night inspection.

Provide explanation for any questions answered no

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Additional Comments:

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Proposed plan Approved ____ Denied ____