

Historic Preservation & Community Design Element

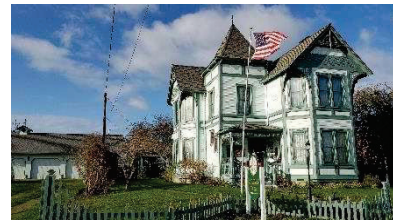
Introduction

This element combines historic preservation and community design as a singular, integrated element. Preservation is a dynamic process whereby cultural values are both tangible and intangible and are acknowledged and perpetuated as part of an integrated planning program. With at least 136 contributing and non-contributing historic properties, the community takes great pride in its history and unique context within Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve (Reserve).

Central Whidbey Island Historic District and Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve

In 1973, the Central Whidbey Island Historic District (CWIHD) was established, creating the largest national historic district in the country. The CWIHD followed the original Donation Land Claim boundaries, acknowledging the historic landscape and historic buildings. It included more than 8,000 acres of land surrounding Penn Cove. Located within the district are original Donation Land Claims established by early White colonials according to the provisions of the Donation Land Claim Act passed by Congress in 1850, along with numerous historic buildings and sites.

The establishment of the CWIHD was instrumental in gaining congressional support for the formation of Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve. The Reserve was established by Congress in 1978 "to preserve and protect a rural community which provides an unbroken historic record from nineteenth century exploration and settlement of Puget Sound up to the present time" (Public Law 95-625, Sec. 508 (a), November 10, 1978).



Will Jenne House.

Of the 136 listed properties in Coupeville, 106 are classified as contributing, and 30 are non-contributing to Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve. All historic properties in Ebey's Reserve Inventory are considered to have the same level of protection or categorization as individually listed buildings.

Sustainability

"Preservation is fundamentally a sustainable practice. Adapting and reusing historic structures reduces consumption of raw land, new materials, and other resources. Rehabilitating existing buildings for continued use and maintaining in-place building materials are standard preservation practices that are also good for the overall environment."

- Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve Trust Board

Nationally significant, when the Reserve was established, it represented a new approach to preserving land and heritage resources. The Reserve's distinct landscape, rural character, and heritage resources are economically important within the agricultural, recreation, and tourism industries, are socially important within our community, and are worthy of continued proactive preservation. This new approach recognized the Town of Coupeville as a key partner in the Reserve.

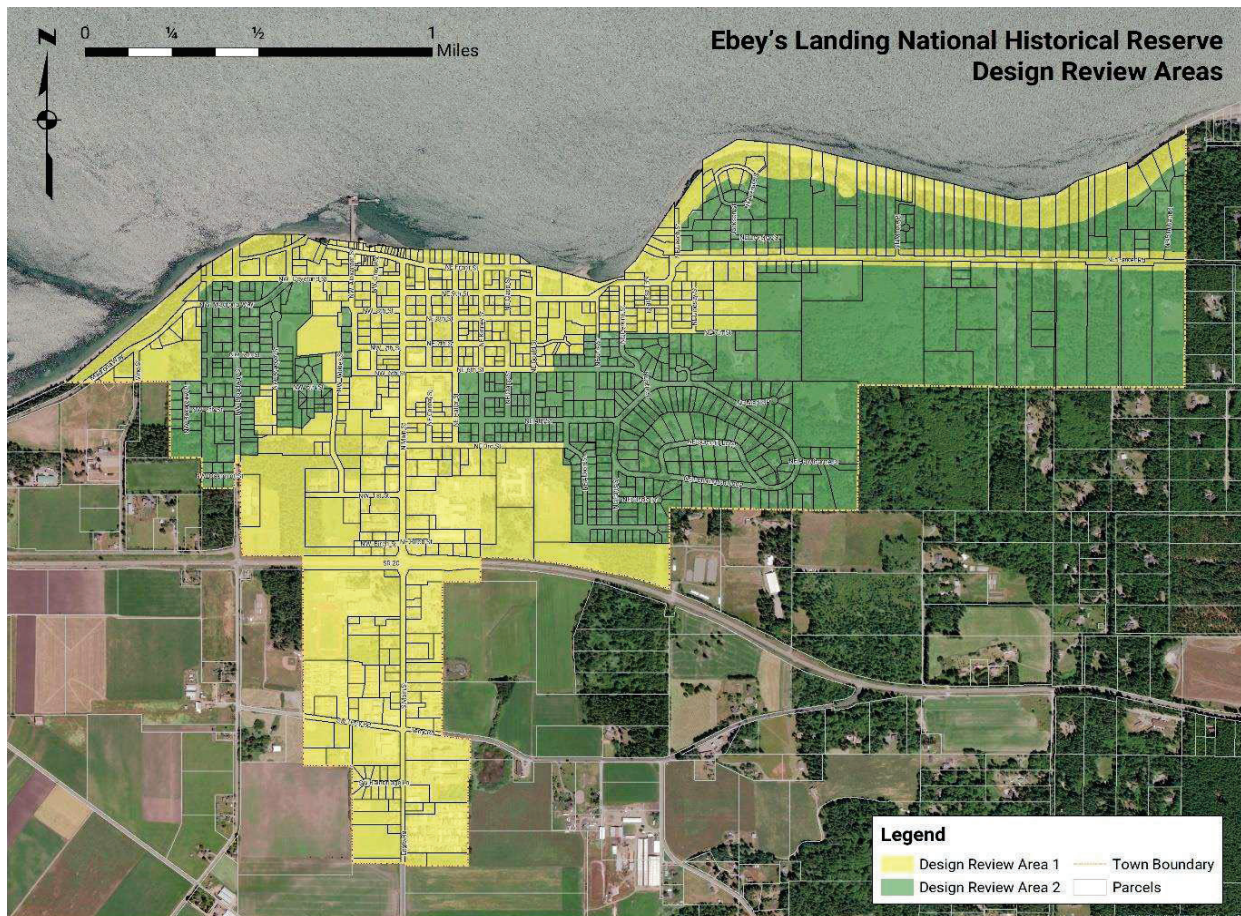
Ebey's Reserve Trust Board

The nine-member Trust Board is made up of representatives appointed by the four government partners of the 1988 Interlocal Agreement: the Town of Coupeville, Island County, Washington State Parks, and the National Park Service. Island County, in coordination with the Trust Board, employs a Reserve Manager. The Trust Board employs other staff as needed. The Trust Board's key responsibilities are to coordinate the partnership defined in the 1988 Interlocal Agreement, to monitor scenic easements acquired by the National Park Service within the Reserve, and to advise local, state, and federal partners on preservation in the Reserve. The Historic Preservation Coordinator supports the Historic Reserve Committee and the Historic Preservation Commission by providing expertise during the design review process.



Colonel's House.

Learn more about the Reserve and historic preservation.
ebeyreserve.com



Design review areas in Coupeville.

Ebey's Reserve Design Review Process

The Ebey's Reserve Design Guidelines were adopted in 2011, along with Coupeville Town Code Chapter 16.13 - Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve Design Review and Community Design Standards, which provide a mechanism to protect the historic resources in the Reserve and evaluate the appropriateness of new development within the Reserve. "Design review" is the process of applying context-specific design guidelines to proposed development and land use projects, including new construction, remodels, and restoration of historic resources. The review process serves as a tool to help property owners care for, preserve, and protect the overall character and appearance of the Reserve. Design review ensures sensitive rehabilitation and new construction that respects the unique historic character of the Reserve. The Town of Coupeville

Design Review Areas

The difference in Areas 1 and 2 is the range of design guidelines applicable to rehabilitation and construction projects.

Design Review Area 2 has a more modern character and less stringent review requirements and standards.

and Island County have unified municipal codes that are closely aligned, helping maintain consistency throughout the Reserve.

The design review process is supported by the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), a volunteer board with members appointed by the Town of Coupeville and Island County. The HPC reviews projects within the Reserve and issues either recommendations or decisions on Certificates of Appropriateness (COAs). The success of the design review process is reflected in the well-preserved buildings, landscapes, and overall character of the Reserve that we enjoy today.

Goals and Policies

Goal HP-1: Historic Resources. Protect, preserve, and celebrate Coupeville's historic resources.

- HP-1.1 Jointly conduct a major update of the Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve Design Guidelines with Island County and the Reserve. At a minimum, the guidelines should continue to ensure that new construction is compatible with surrounding development in terms of building scale, historical context, architectural character, siting, and massing.
- HP-1.2 Update and maintain zoning provisions to accommodate modest and compatible infill development in the Historic Commercial Center and areas near historic structures, while encouraging the restoration, rehabilitation, reconstruction, and preservation of historic structures. Adaptive reuse or re-purposing of all existing structures is encouraged where practical.
- HP-1.3 Support the preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of historic and cultural resources in Coupeville through zoning, financial, and other incentives. Where appropriate, incentives should be provided to incorporate coastal adaptation strategies during preservation, restoration, or rehabilitation of historic structures or cultural resources to increase resilience to the impacts of rising sea levels.

Further Reading

For additional background information on the history of Coupeville, refer to "Coupeville - Past, Present and Future: Historic Preservation Plan" (1998) and "How Coupeville Grew: A Short History of Town Development: Excerpts from the Town's Historic Preservation Plan" (1998).



The home of Captain Thomas Coupe and Maria Coupe, circa 1933.



Historic house (photo credit: Dave Wechner).

HP-1.4 Encourage the purchase of development rights through conservation easements by other entities (such as the National Park Service and the Whidbey Camano Land Trust) to protect structures, agricultural fields, woodlands, wetlands, shorelines, forests, and other features and landscapes that represent the most enduring and character- defining characteristics of Coupeville and the Reserve.

HP-1.5 Maintain and enhance the Town design review process in a manner that supports historic preservation goals in a fair, equitable, and predictable manner. Ensure non-historic areas are not over-regulated.

HP-1.6 Emphasize the Town's historic context and highlight those features in tourism messaging and throughout the community.

HP-1.7 Support the Coupeville Historic Waterfront Association, Historic Whidbey, Island County Historical Museum, Chamber of Commerce, Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve, and other partners in efforts to improve the structural integrity and appearance of historic buildings in the historic business core. Resilience strategies, such as updating energy systems, incorporating cooling systems, improving building materials, and planning for future climate conditions, should be considered during restoration activities.

HP-1.8 Continue to partner with and support the Trust Board of Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve.

HP-1.9 Coordinate with Island County and the Reserve to provide ongoing staff support, training, and guidance to the Historic Preservation Commission.

HP-1.10 In partnership with Island County and the Reserve, maintain a database of historic structures in Central Whidbey that is compatible with statewide standards developed by the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.



The prairie, farm, and forest environment surrounding Coupeville (photo credit: Allison Gubata).



The Coupeville Cash Store Building, built in 1886, and newly renovated and renamed to Salty Vons Waterfront Inn (photo credit: Von and Barbara Summers).



Front Street, circa 1920

- HP-1.11 In partnership with Island County, explore the possibility of becoming a Certified Local Government.
- HP-1.12 Install prominent gateway features at entry points into the historic commercial center.
- HP-1.13 Protect significant sites prone to floods, windstorms, sea level rise, extreme temperatures, and other hazards worsened by climate change.



The Coupeville Wharf (photo credit: John Hummel).

Goal HP-2: Cultural Resources & Practices. Enhance the resilience of cultural resources and practices, including against extreme weather and other natural hazards worsened by climate change.

- HP-2.1  Protect significant historic sites and buildings prone to floods or other hazards worsened by climate change. When appropriate, encourage incorporating coastal adaptation strategies during the preservation, restoration or rehabilitation of historic structures or cultural resources to increase resiliency to rising sea levels.

- HP-2.2  Establish stronger ties and maintain government-to-government relations with Native American tribes for the preservation of archaeological sites and traditional cultural properties that are vulnerable to climate impacts.



The predecessor bands of the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community and their territories. The Samish are succeeded today by the Samish Indian Nation. (image credit: PersusjCP).

- HP-2.3 Ensure that cultural resources, including significant historic sites, traditional foods, and natural resources, are prepared for the impacts of extreme weather worsened by climate change.
- HP-2.4 Maintain effective and up-to-date protocols and plans for the inadvertent discovery of cultural resources and for the coordination with Tribal partners and the Washington Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation.

Goal HP-3: Quality Development. Promote compatible, high-quality, pedestrian-friendly development that reinforces Coupeville's small-town identity within Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve.

HP-3.1 Update zoning provisions to implement Coupeville's community design goals. Specifically:

- A. While respecting the historic Town plat and grid system, integrate flexibility in the design of subdivisions to accommodate greater lot/housing type diversity, take advantage of unique site amenities and/or adjacent contextual elements, maximize opportunities for common open space, and help meet Coupeville's environmental goals and policies. Avoid suburban design trends, including cul-de-sacs, rolled curbs, stacked mailboxes, wide streets, and other modern features.
- B. Incentivize the development of smaller, architecturally compatible homes and dwelling units.
- C. Update sign regulations that balance the visibility and identity needs of businesses within the neighborhood context.
- D. Ensure view corridors are acknowledged and protected within the context of historic preservation.

HP-3.2 Re-evaluate and update the design guidelines at least every ten years to reflect current community goals and objectives; adjust as necessary to improve effectiveness.

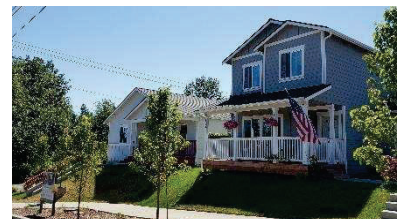
- A. Employ site and building design techniques that promote safe, inviting pedestrian access and connections.
- B. Establish structural massing and articulation standards that respect the character and scale of Coupeville's historic business district, commercial areas, and neighborhoods.



The Frain/Burton Engle House.

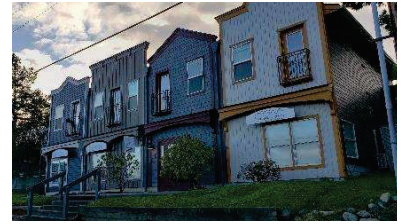
Small homes help preserve Coupeville's historic character while providing starter and more affordable housing options.

See Housing Element Policy H-1.7 for related ideas to explore in a housing action plan.



Example of small homes that are consistent with the Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve Design Guidelines for new construction.

- C. Emphasize human-scaled design details that contribute to the Town's character and identity.
- D. Promote the use of high-quality, durable, and sustainable materials that respect the site's context and enhance the Town's character.
- E. Promote design that highlights special vistas, especially prominent views from public streets and gathering places.
- F. Employ site planning and building design techniques that support safe and inviting pedestrian access and connections.
- G. Review parking standards in residential and commercial areas to minimize impacts on community character, including the number of required spaces, location of spaces, and appropriate screening.
- H. Protect native vegetation, particularly forests, as an enduring and character-defining feature of Coupeville and the Reserve, especially those visible from points of entry and primary roads.
- I. Strive for a balance of predictability and flexibility in the design guidelines.



A mixed-use office and lodging building with significant modulation and parking located in the rear.



View from Front Street (photo credit: John Hummel).



Afternoon on Coupeville Wharf (photo credit: John Hummel).