



Ashtabula County Historical Society Century Home Program

Ashtabula County Historical Society is pleased to present a new Century Home Program in 2023. New to the program are separate designations honoring the architectural and family or social histories of properties around the county, as well as options for property owners to participate in the research process.

Overview

Ashtabula County Historical Society has long sought to document, archive, and celebrate the history of homes at least 100 years old throughout the county. In an effort to encourage homeowners to learn about and preserve the histories of their homes, the Society will now offer a designation called “Century Homesite”. Aimed at preserving the historical stories of homesites throughout the county, this program will allow homeowners to submit the rich and varied research of homes that do not necessarily meet the architecture-oriented requirements of our more traditional Century Home Program. The Historical Society will display an inventory of all homes in the program online, complete with photos, copies of the research submitted, and the final report designating the home as part of the program.

The Historical Society will begin accepting applications for verification under both designations on May 1, 2023. Applications are available online at www.ashtabulahistory.com.

Century Home

A Century Home is a residential property within Ashtabula County that has existed for at least 100 years. Homes fitting this designation are recognizable as a product of their time. Architectural features have been preserved or restored, rooflines have been maintained, and the original design of the home has been respected.

In order to qualify for this designation, the homeowner must make an application for verification to the Society. Homeowners are permitted to provide their own research or may request research be conducted by the Historical Society for a fee. Once researched has been conducted and verification completed by the Program committee, the home will be inducted into the program with a plaque.

Century Homesite

A Century Homesite is a property in Ashtabula County that has been continuously occupied as a residence for at least 100 years, as demonstrated by a clear history of owners and property use. These properties contain dwellings that have been modified or updated to an extent that it cannot be designated as a Century Home, but the owner wishes to document and preserve the history of the property as part of the historical record of our county.

Program Criteria

Century Home	Century Homesite
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Age: Must be at least 100 years old, as verified by county records, and the original use must have been as a residential property. ▪ Occupancy: Owner must occupy the home as primary residence at the time of designation. ▪ Environment: landscaping, outbuildings, etc. must be well-maintained. The addition of modern buildings on a property NOT attached to the original home will not exclude a site from this program. ▪ Structure: Distinguishing original qualities or character of the building must be preserved. Alterations to external facades must be compatible with the character of the original structure. External changes to the building should maintain the architectural details of the original structure (i.e., windows, doors etc.). Maintenance-saving changes such as vinyl siding and windows will not immediately exclude a home from consideration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Age: Must be at least 100 years old, as verified by county records, and the original use must have been as a residential property. ▪ Occupancy: Owner must occupy the home as a primary residence at the time of designation. ▪ Environment: Exterior site, including landscaping, outbuildings, etc. must be well-maintained. ▪ Historical Documentation: The owner must be able to demonstrate continued occupancy of the property for at least 100 years. We do not require the chain of occupants to be related. In addition to the chain of ownership, owners are encouraged to supply stories and photographs of the property.

Costs

To aid in reducing costs to owners and the Society, we offer a discount to all owners completing an online application and submitting all materials in a digital format.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Application & Verification Fee - \$250 (covers the cost of reviewing and verifying all research conducted) ▪ Hourly fee for research conducted by the society - \$30/hour + expenses (copies, etc.) ▪ Plaque – cost varies by material selected ▪ Digital-only discount - \$50 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Application & Verification Fee: \$125 verification fee (covers the cost of reviewing and verifying all research conducted) ▪ Plaque – cost varies by material selected ▪ Digital-only discount - \$25
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Costs paid to the Historical Society as verification fees are tax-deductible.

Research

To aid in the verification of the property, homeowners (or society researchers) must provide a clear history of the ownership of the property from initial construction of the home forward. When available, history of individual owners should be part of the story of the property.

Research provided should include:

- Deed search report and copies of deeds establishing chain of ownership *
- Copies of historical sources pertaining to the architecture and social history of the home *
- Surveyors' sketches of the house and parcel *
- Tax records, especially where significant changes in the value of the property are noted *
- Photos – current and historic – of the home, unique features, and architectural elements documenting the history of construction *
- Maintenance records, where available, especially when indicative of preservation of historic elements
- Descriptions of building materials

**Required for both Century Home and Century Homesite designations*

Materials provided will not be returned.

Historic Businesses

Many century homes throughout the county have been converted for use as a business. The Ashtabula County Historical Society will consider awarding a Century Home Designation to businesses operating in a century home. Century Homes used as businesses must meet the criteria outlined above and changes made to the property to facilitate the operation of the business must be well-documented (including installation of fire suppression, etc.) Business owners are encouraged to contact the Society prior to submission of an application to discuss an individual property.

This program is an honorary award only. It does not qualify homes for local or national historical designation, does not place restrictions upon work to the house in any way, nor does it provide financial assistance for maintenance of designated homes.