

Expedited Review of Minor Work on Historic Buildings

Under the DC Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act (DC Code Sec. 5-1005), exterior alterations to historic properties are subject to review by the Historic Preservation Review Board. For cases involving minor work not likely to affect a property's historic character, the Board has delegated review authority to the Historic Preservation Office. Under this delegation, the Office may, when appropriate, give an "over-the-counter" clearance of permit applications for work meeting the Board's approval criteria.

Materials Required for Expedited Review

To qualify for expedited review, applicants are required to submit adequate documentation to show that the proposed work is compatible with the character of the affected historic landmark or district. Such documentation includes:

- Exterior photographs of the building in question;
- If pertinent, photographs of adjacent buildings or the immediate neighborhood; and
- Architectural drawings and/or other materials of sufficient completeness to indicate the extent or design of the proposed work. (The Division may also request any additional information as may be reasonably necessary for its review.)

Consistency with Design Guidelines

In reviewing applications for minor work, the Office applies the general criteria that the Board has established in the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Guidelines. No project is given an expedited approval unless it is determined to be consistent with the Guidelines. Projects deemed inconsistent with the Guidelines are referred to the Board for its consideration.

Eligible Categories of Work

To qualify for this expedited review, applicants are required to submit adequate documentation to the Historic Preservation Office showing that the proposed work is compatible with the character of the affected historic landmark or district.

This delegation includes the following categories of work:

- Minor additions not visible from a public street
- Removal of insignificant or incompatible minor alterations
- Window replacements duplicating the proportion, profile, light configuration, material, and overall appearance of the historic windows, on elevations visible from a public street and appropriate in general appearance when not visible from a public street
- Door replacements compatible with historic doors visible from a public street and appropriate in general appearance where not visible from a public street
- New window or door opening compatible with original opening
- Removal of window or door openings with an appropriate infill
- Installation of appropriate siding materials

- Rear decks
- Roof decks not visible or not obtrusive, as seen from a public street
- Replacement of roofing
- Skylights
- Air conditioning equipment, suitability screened, or unobtrusive
- Inconspicuous plumbing and exhaust vents
- Front yard fences, up to 42' high
- Rear yard fences, up to 7' high
- Retaining walls
- Awnings and canopies
- Signs appropriate in design, scale, and placement, and consistent with the character of the building and historic district
- Unenclosed sidewalk cafes consisting of movable components
- Antennas
- Satellite dishes