

CHAPTER 2 PROCEDURES



Preservation Project Planning

The more that survives—through maintenance and repair—the more money you can save in the long run the better it is for property values and the district as a whole.

Regular maintenance is key to preserving the original design and details of your historic property.

The Historic Preservation Commission and the Department of Community Development are dedicated to helping property owners maintain and improve their buildings throughout the City of Cumberland. A wealth of technical information is available from the Preservation Coordinator, including maintenance tips, a historic photograph collection, and potential financial assistance. The City and the HPC encourage property owners to contact the Department early and often in your project planning to ensure a successful project is carried out in the most efficient and effective manner.

The buildings in the Canal Place Preservation District exhibit a wide range of architectural styles, building types, and levels of integrity - and preservation projects should take these factors into consideration as a starting point. It is important that property owners consider how a particular project - everything from a minor door replacement to a major storefront rehabilitation - fits into the overall character of the building as well as the District as a whole.

DETERMINE THE STYLE OR CHARACTER OF THE PROPERTY

First, try to gauge the general style or character of the property. Try locating any historic photographs that show its older appearance, especially if the original design has been altered. Determine from these views which building features, such as roof and cornice shape, building

height, wall openings (fenestration) and stylistic details, help define its overall style or character. Consult the Preservation Coordinator for advice if no historic views can be found. Refer to Chapter 4 for brief overviews of the most common architectural styles and building types found in Cumberland.

DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF INTEGRITY

There are seven aspects of integrity which contribute to determining the overall significance of a historic property: location, feeling, association, setting, materials, workmanship, and design. The HPC may consider any and all aspects of integrity when determining the appropriate outcome of a project. Definitions of the seven aspects of integrity can be found online through the National Park Service: http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/nrb15_8.htm

Knowing the level of integrity of the building will help determine the appropriate historic preservation approach for the property. Remember: it is not the sole intent of the HPC to have property owners restore buildings to their original design. Each building and neighborhood varies and it is important to plan projects that either maintain or improve the integrity of the building as a whole.

As a property owner, try to assess the amount of **historic fabric** (i.e., historic features) that remains intact. In general, the more historic features that survive the better.

High Integrity: If the original design and historic materials remain largely intact, then preservation of that appearance is the recommended approach—and the one most likely to earn approval from the HPC. Rehabilitation is also appropriate when some original features must be updated or replaced but the property as a whole retains a large portion of its original design, materials, and workmanship.

Moderate Integrity: If the building has been only partially altered, some of its historic features will remain in place. This level of integrity is especially apparent in commercial properties where the upper floors remain untouched while the ground floors have undergone several renovations. The building's overall character is still discernible, although somewhat degraded or altered.

Several options are available for buildings retaining moderate integrity. If your budget allows and if sufficient documentation (usually historic photographs) exists, the best option is rehabilitation or restoration. A second option could be to restore some historic elements with, perhaps, the introduction of new features that are compatible with the historic design. The introduction of new features, such as a storefront, can be tricky especially without the aid of an experienced architect. Thus, the Preservation Coordinator should be consulted as early in the process as possible.

Low Integrity: If your building has been radically altered and all of its historic design has been lost, you have three options: (1) maintain the building “as is”; (2) consider reconstructing the original facade (if sufficient documentation exists); (3) or create a new design that is compatible with the historic buildings in your immediate vicinity.

DETERMINE THE BEST HISTORIC PRESERVATION APPROACH

After having assessed the design integrity and physical condition of your building, you may have begun to develop a preservation strategy. Check this initial thinking with the four-step process recommended below.

Remember: these are based on the assumption that regular maintenance and repair is the best conservator of any building—old or new.

#1. **Identify:** As noted above, first identify and understand those features of your building that are historic and integral to its historic character.

#2. **Protect and Maintain:** The most effective way of preserving a building, old or new, is through appropriate ongoing maintenance. With regular maintenance, the need for more drastic measures, such as replacement, is often reduced.

#3. **Repair:** Character-defining building elements and architectural features should be preserved through repair and rehabilitation rather than replacement or removal.

#4. **Replace:** Only when a feature is too deteriorated to repair, should it be replaced “in kind.” Use the same materials, scale, and detailing whenever feasible.

NOTE

If any new construction is part of your project, you must demonstrate to the HPC that the scale, massing, proportions, site placement, and materials comply with these guidelines and are compatible with the contributing historic buildings on or adjacent to your property. The HPC supports and encourages new investment that is sensitive to the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

PRESERVATION DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES

Procedures

HIGH INTEGRITY The historic form and nearly all historic materials, features, or historic alterations remain intact and well preserved.



MODERATE INTEGRITY The historic form and several historic features and materials remain intact, but modifications and replacements have occurred.



LOW INTEGRITY The historic form may be the only recognizable historic feature as most materials and features have been altered or replaced.



<p>STEP 1</p> <p>Is my property located within the Preservation District?</p> <p><i>YES - move to Step 2</i> <i>NO - no COA needed</i></p>	
<p>STEP 2</p> <p>Does my project involve replacement, major repairs, new construction, or demolition?</p> <p><i>You need a certificate of appropriateness move to Step 3</i></p>	<p>Does my project involve interior renovations, general maintenance, or minor landscaping?</p> <p><i>You do not need a certificate of appropriateness</i></p>
<p>STEP 3</p> <p>Does my project involve major alterations?</p> <p>Does my project deviate from any of the design guidelines?</p> <p><i>Your COA must be approved by Commission review</i></p>	<p>Is my project considered minor?</p> <p>Does my project adhere to all of the design guidelines?</p> <p><i>Your COA may be approved through administrative review</i></p>

DETERMINE WHETHER A COA IS NEEDED

General maintenance activities on your historic property do not need to be approved by the HPC. This would include any work where the historic material remains intact and preserved - for example, reattaching downspouts, roof repair, minor landscaping, etc. Interior work is not regulated by the HPC.

Any exterior maintenance work requiring replacement or alteration, where the historic material or character of the historic district would potentially be impacted, and any new construction or demolition requires an application for a Certificate of Approval (COA). The Preservation Coordinator at the Department of Community Development will review your application and determine whether the work can be approved on an administrative level or if it needs to be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission.

» *Administrative Review* is generally limited to repairs and minor in-kind replacements, where the overall physical integrity of a historic feature will not be impacted. The application must meet all applicable guidelines in this document. Examples include:

- » Masonry repointing
- » Exterior painting on surfaces which are currently painted
- » Copy changes on existing signs

» *Historic Preservation Commission Review* is required for all other COA applications. This includes repairs and minor replacements that do not meet the guidelines in this document and cannot be cleared under administrative review.

» *Consent Agenda* is a form of HPC review, applicable when a project cannot be approved at the administrative level but meets all applicable guidelines and, in the opinion of the Preservation Coordinator, would be approved by the HPC without additional discussion.

IMPORTANT

If the property is subject to a Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) easement, or if the project involves state or federal preservation tax credits, be sure to contact MHT staff prior to applying for a COA. Contact information can be found at: <http://www.mht.maryland.gov/callwho3.shmtl>.

TIMELINE

A completed COA application (as determined by the Historic Planner/ Preservation Coordinator) is due to the Department of Community Development no later than seven (7) days prior to the next scheduled Historic Preservation Commission Meeting.

The Historic Preservation Commission meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 4:00 p.m. on the second floor in the Council Chambers in City Hall.

Its meetings are open to all members of the public. A representative of the COA application must attend the meeting if the property is on the agenda.



Washington Street Historic District.

Procedural Steps for Obtaining a COA

The design review process in the City of Cumberland requires the following steps to obtain a COA for any activity within the Canal Place Preservation District governed by the City Zoning Ordinance. This COA must be acquired before any work can occur on the subject property.

STEPS:

1. Apply for all other relevant building permits, include an Occupancy Permit, prior to filing for a COA. The decisions rendered by the HPC do not supersede any requirements set forth by the Zoning Ordinance or the fire, health, and safety regulations. Coordinate with the Preservation Coordinator if you believe there to be conflicting guidelines.

2. Complete a COA application (available at the Department of Community Development in City Hall). Consult with the Preservation Coordinator to ensure all necessary components are prepared. Required documentation includes:
 - a. Written Scope of Work – include all proposed improvements.
 - b. Photographs of the Site and Structure – include photographs of the entire elevation and indicate where on the elevation the proposed work is located. Include detailed photographs where necessary to illustrate existing or proposed conditions.
 - c. Facade Elevations
 - d. Samples of Proposed Materials
 - e. Scaled Drawings and/or Plans. These should be accurately drawn to scale and show sufficient detail of the entire building or structure in elevation (and plan, where applicable). This should include all features, including windows, cornices, walls, foundations, roofs, signs, lighting, awnings, and any other pertinent architectural features.

NOTE

The Preservation Coordinator, the HPC, and the Zoning Officer are authorized to require such additional information as may be deemed necessary or appropriate for the proper administration and enforcement of this Ordinance.



North Centre Street.

- f. Digital Renderings, When Available
- g. Color Scheme/Paint Chips
- h. Manufacturers Cut-Sheets or Product Specifications

Additional Potential Requirements for Commercial Properties

- » Section drawings and construction details, as requested by the HPC or Preservation Coordinator.
- » Written methodology for cleaning and installation, which show the work conforms to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Buildings.
- » An existing conditions drawing may be requested, specifically for projects involving the rehabilitation of a storefront or commercial facade. This should include elements of prior facades which may exist behind present-day additions. In many cases, removal of selected pieces of the present facade will provide information about the degree and condition of the extant historic structure.

Additional supplemental information is required for applications involving the full or partial demolition of resources contributing to the Canal Place Preservation District. Refer to Chapter 6 for more information.

3. Submit one original hard copy and one digital copy of all supplemental documentation along with the complete COA application to the Preservation Coordinator in the Department of Community Development at City Hall.

The Preservation Coordinator, in consultation with the Community Development Manager, may determine that an application meets all requirements of the preservation ordinance and guidelines presented herein. In such cases, a COA may be issued at the administrative level which does not require the review of the HPC. Attendance at an HPC meeting would not be needed in this instance.

4. Once the application is determined by the staff to be complete, the application will be scheduled for a decision at the HPC's next regularly scheduled meeting. Completed applications must be submitted at least seven (7) days prior to a regularly scheduled HPC meeting in order to receive a decision at that meeting.

5. Applicants will be notified of the meeting date and are required to attend the meeting to discuss their project. Applicants whose projects are on the agenda (including the consent agenda) are required to attend the meeting to discuss their project. When your property is next on the agenda, be prepared to briefly describe the proposed work and to answer questions asked by the HPC or the Preservation Coordinator as the project is reviewed. Bring with you any additional information requested or any resources you believe help support your application for the COA (paint scheme, samples of proposed replacement materials, etc).

The HPC may approve your application as submitted; they may approve your application contingent on a subsequent staff review related to request for additional information; or they may deny your application and request that your plan be revised and your application be resubmitted. If the HPC determines that there is insufficient information to make a vote, they may table the application until the next meeting and ask the applicant to provide additional information. A majority vote is required to approve or table applications.

6. Approved COA applications, which require a majority vote by the Commission, are forwarded to the Department of Community Development for issuance of a Historic Area Work Permit, a copy of which is forwarded to the applicant. The applicant will receive a written copy of all HPC decisions.



Baltimore Street pedestrian mall.

7. The Permit must be issued and received by the applicant before any work can take place at the subject property. The property owner must do work in accordance with the approved application.

Property owners must notify the Preservation Coordinator of any changes to an approved COA application - including changes in material. If the modifications are minor (as determined by the Preservation Coordinator) and meet all of the design guidelines, approval may be granted through administrative review. Any major changes to an application will require review by the HPC.



South Centre Street.

ENFORCEMENT

The administration and enforcement provisions of the Cumberland Zoning Ordinance must also be adhered to for any work within the District. Note that a Certificate of Appropriateness must be approved by the Historic Preservation Commission before work within the District can commence. These COAs are issued by the Department of Community Development following Historic Preservation Commission review or, in specific cases, following administrative approval by the Commission staff. A fine of up to \$500.00 per day for the first offense will be levied for work undertaken in the absence of a COA. Up to \$1,000.00 per day will be levied for second offenses.

APPEALS

Any person or persons, firm, or corporation aggrieved by a decision of the Historic Preservation Commission has a right of appeal to the Circuit Court of Allegany County. Appeal requests must occur within thirty (30) days from the date on which the Commission decision was made.