



CITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Department of Planning, Engineering & Permits  
710 North 20th Street, Room 500 City Hall  
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

[www.birminghamal.gov](http://www.birminghamal.gov)

# DESIGN REVIEW MANUAL

*A Resource for Owners of Properties Located in Local Historic Districts*



CITY OF BIRMINGHAM  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, ENGINEERING & PERMITS  
Birmingham Historical Commission

Randall L. Woodfin, Mayor  
Katrina R. Thomas, Director

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City of Birmingham

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For further information, contact the Urban Design Division of the Department of Planning, Engineering, and Permits at 254-2479.

Front Cover Pictures: Before and after photographs of properties that were restored or rehabilitated after undergoing the design review process.

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## ***Purpose of the Manual***

*This manual is designed to assist owners of properties located in Birmingham's local historic districts. The manual will define the purpose and benefits of design review and will cover the steps involved in the design review process. It will be particularly useful to property owners who have active cases scheduled for review by the City's Design Review Committee.*

## ***Benefits of Local Historic District Designation***

*Local historic district designation is permitted in those National Register Historic Districts where property owners have elected to assume the regulatory process of design review under an adopted Historic Preservation Plan that includes design guidelines for the particular district being designated. Benefits of the designation include the following:*

- The visual and historical integrity and the "sense of place" of the neighborhood are protected;*
- Historic districts are preserved as records of our City's historical and architectural heritage;*
- Historic areas are given official recognition by the City;*
- Neighborhoods are revitalized and strengthened;*
- Economic incentives for investment are yielded;*
- Property values are protected and increased; and*
- The community's tax base is strengthened.*

## ***Purposes of Design Review in Local Historic Districts***

- To ensure that the character of historic districts is retained, protected, and enhanced;*
- To review major, proposed exterior changes to historic properties for conformity with the historic guidelines adopted in the district's preservation plan; and*
- To strengthen the economy of the City of Birmingham by enhancing its attractiveness to residents, visitors, and businesses and by stabilizing and improving property values, thereby maintaining economic investment in the City and avoiding or reversing urban decay and blight.*

## ***Frequently Asked Questions***

***Note: The following questions and answers are applicable only to properties located in local historic districts of the City of Birmingham.***

### ***1. What is Design Review?***

*Design Review is a process whereby a committee of citizens reviews development plans for proposed new construction projects, rehabilitation projects, repair work, additions, signs, demolitions, and other major modifications to properties in order to ensure that the proposed changes are compatible with the design guidelines included in the Historic Preservation Plan for the particular local historic district in which the property is located. When plans for non-routine maintenance exterior work are proposed, then the applicant or the applicant's agent must present those plans to the City's Design Review Committee (DRC). This process must occur prior to permit issuance. For local historic district properties, this process is authorized by the City of Birmingham's Historic Preservation Ordinance (Ordinance No. 92-223 as amended by Ordinance No.00-81).*

### ***2. What are the benefits of design review and design guidelines?***

- Plans for alterations and new construction are reviewed to ensure enhancement to the historic appearance of existing buildings and environments;*
- Potential negative impacts on the environment are minimized;*
- The typically high quality of construction for historic buildings is maintained;*
- Education is provided about rehabilitation & restoration techniques and design; and*
- A framework is provided for consistency and uniformity in decision-making.*

### ***3. What types of cases require review by the Design Review Committee?***

*Except for routine maintenance work, any proposed change to the exterior of a building, site, or other structure located in a designated local historic district of the City of Birmingham requires review by the Design Review Committee. Those changes include modifications for which a building permit, sign permit, demolition permit, or soil erosion control permit is required, as well as changes in roof material types and changes involving the painting of originally unpainted surfaces. Additionally, proposed fences and driveways that are not consistent*

with the historic and architectural character of the subject property and the historic district may require review by the Design Review Committee.

**4. When I apply for a City permit, how will I know if design review is required?**

At the time of permit application, an applicant is notified as to whether the subject property is located in a local historic district. If it is, the City's Historic Preservation Staff will review the plans submitted to determine if the work involved is routine maintenance only and thus eligible for a waiver of the design review requirement (see #5 below) or if it is work that requires review by the Design Review Committee and approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA, see #6 below) prior to the issuance of a permit. In some instances, in order to make that determination more information, such as a site plan, elevation drawings, or color photographs of the property, might be requested.

**5. What is a Waiver, and under what circumstances is it issued?**

A Waiver is a document releasing the applicant from the need for review of his or her plans by the Design Review Committee and from the need for a Certificate of Appropriateness. It specifies the minimum repairs approved and the allowable method for such repairs, based on the district's design guidelines.

The City's Urban Design staff issues a Waiver in cases involving only interior work and/or routine maintenance work that does not affect the overall exterior appearance and architectural character of the building.

**6. What is a Certificate of Appropriateness Application, and when is it needed?**

A Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Application is the document filed by an applicant to request that the Design Review Committee evaluate proposed non-routine maintenance changes to a building or site in a local historic district. In most instances, the COA is processed after applicants have applied for permits for major exterior changes such as new construction, alterations, additions, rehabilitations, or demolitions.

**7. What steps are involved in the design review process?**

For cases that are not eligible for a waiver of the design review requirements, a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Application must be completed by the

applicant and approved by the Design Review Committee. The specific steps in the COA/design review process are as follows:

- 1) Present building or signage plans and other information (site plan, elevation drawings, color rendering, color photos, etc. as outlined on the Submittal Requirements List, see Appendix A) to the Permitting, Zoning, and Historic Preservation Staff in the Department of Planning, Engineering & Permits, Room 210 City Hall.
- 2) Speak with the Zoning Staff in Room 210 of City Hall to determine whether zoning requirements for the project are met. If members of the Zoning Staff determine that a variance, rezoning, or resurvey is needed, then submit the appropriate application(s).
- 3) Once all zoning issues are resolved, speak with the Historic Preservation Staff to apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) and to obtain the Design Review Committee's meeting date and time and any other related information.
- 4) Prior to the Design Review Committee's meeting date, present plans to the Local Historic Advisory Committee (LHAC) or, in the absence of an LHAC, to the Neighborhood Association (through its Executive Board, Design Committee, or Historic Preservation Society Board) for the particular local historic district in which the property is located.
- 5) Present plans to the City's Design Review Committee.
- 6) If the case is approved or approved with conditions, proceed with the remainder of the permitting process.
- 7) If the case is denied, see numbers 13 and 14 below.

**8. What types of decisions does the Design Review Committee make?**

The Design Review Committee can vote to approve, approve with modifications, or deny a request. Also, in some instances, the DRC may vote to continue a case based on the need for more information. In the history of the local historic district design review process (begun in 1994), most cases have either been approved according to the plans initially submitted or approved subject to modifications/conditions.



**9. What standard of review is used by the Design Review Committee in evaluating Certificate of Appropriateness Applications?**

*The Design Review Committee's standard or basis for review is whether the proposed change, construction, or demolition conforms to the design standards established for the particular local historic district, is compatible with the character of the historic property and district, and does not detract from the value of the historic property and district.*

**10. Does the design review process allow for neighborhood participation?**

*Yes. According to the Historic Preservation Ordinance [Sec. 7-1-205(d)(1)], in order to facilitate neighborhood participation in the administration of local historic districts, those districts "shall have the right to designate local historic advisory committees ("Committees") to be appointed by the Citizens Participation Neighborhood Association ("Neighborhood Association") in which all or a majority of the local historic district is located."*

*Each local historic district must have a Historic Preservation Plan that includes design guidelines. In the process of drafting a Historic Preservation Plan, the neighborhood association must determine if it wants its own Local Historic Advisory Committee (LHAC). If it does, then any design review cases for properties located within that district would first be reviewed by the LHAC, which then would make a recommendation to the City's DRC. If the Neighborhood Association chooses not to have its own LHAC, then it still would be notified of cases in its district to be heard by the DRC and would have the opportunity to review those cases and provide comments to the DRC prior to the scheduled DRC meeting dates.*

*LHAC recommendations are given strong consideration by the DRC. In instances where the DRC elects to reverse, either wholly or partly, or to modify the LHAC's recommendation, a vote of two-thirds (2/3) majority of DRC members present at the review meeting is required.*

**11. Can a permit be issued before the City's Design Review Committee hears a Certificate of Appropriateness case?**

*No. A permit for exterior work cannot be issued prior to the Design Review*

*Committee's review of the project and approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness.*

**12. How soon can I obtain a permit after my case is approved by the Design Review Committee?**

*If a case is approved by the Design Review Committee, a permit can be obtained immediately as long as all other reviews and requirements for issuance of the permit have been met. The Permits Staff in Room 210 of City Hall can advise applicants on the status of an existing permit application.*

**13. What happens if my application for a Certificate of Appropriateness (or a Certificate of Appropriateness with revisions) is denied by the Design Review Committee?**

*If a case is denied by the Design Review Committee, the applicant has four options:*

- 1) Do nothing. Such inaction makes the applicant unable to obtain permits for the particular project reviewed by the DRC. (In the case of demolition permit applications, owners of properties in local historic districts may be denied demolition permits for up to 12 months from the date of denial by the DRC. During that time, other options rather than destruction can be identified for the historic property.)*
- 2) Request a determination of economic hardship from the DRC. In this case, an owner is required to show that conformance with the design standards established will result in economic hardship so as to deprive the owner of reasonable use of or return on the property.*
- 3) Make modifications to the plans and submit them with an application for reconsideration. This can be done at any time after the original denial.*
- 4) Make written appeal of the denial of the Certificate of Appropriateness or the denial of a finding of economic hardship. For the procedure for this appeal, see #14 below.*

*14. What is the appeals process if a case is denied by the Design Review Committee?*

*If a case is denied by the Design Review Committee and an applicant chooses not to request a determination of economic hardship or to modify his or her plans and resubmit the application for reconsideration, the applicant can make written appeal of the denial to the Birmingham Historical Commission (BHC) within fifteen (15) days of the denial. The BHC shall hear the appeal within thirty (30) days and shall render its opinion in writing within five working days after its decision. In the event that the applicant remains unsatisfied, a final appeal may be filed with the Circuit Court of Jefferson County.*

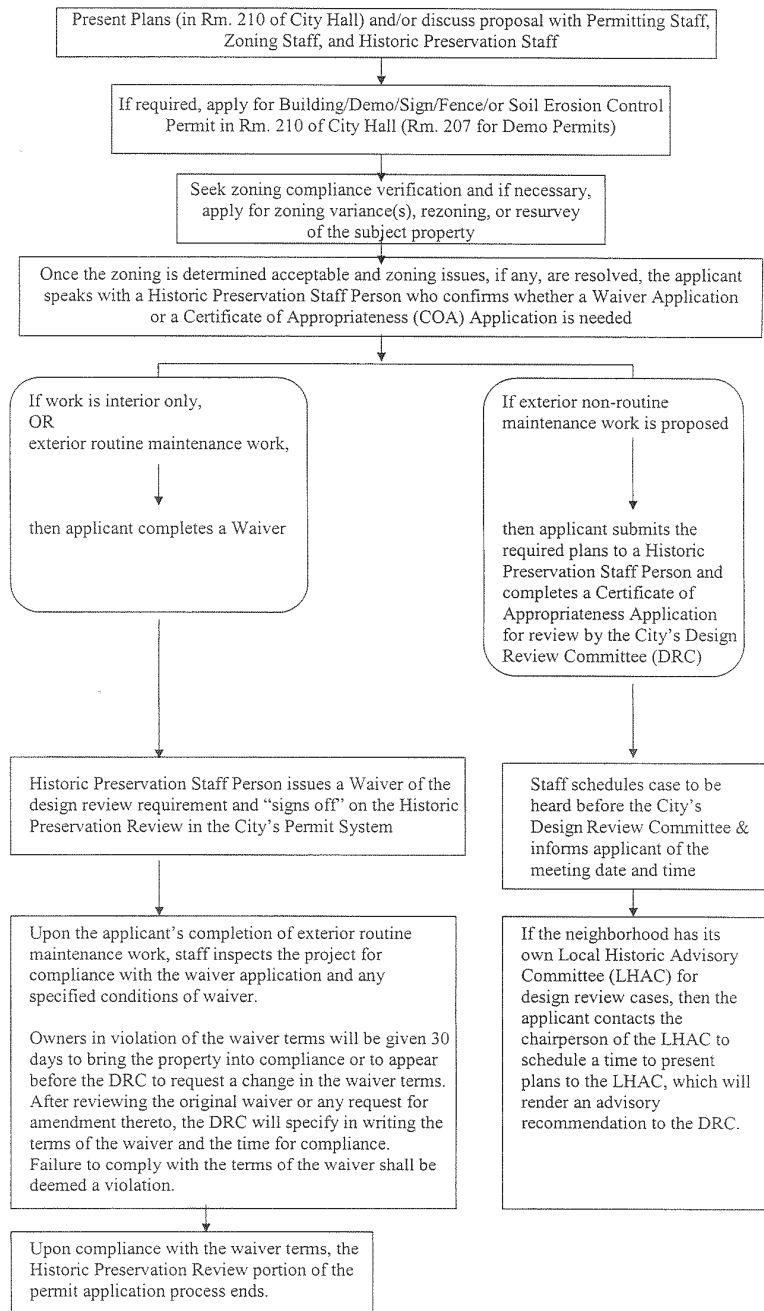
*Flowchart of the Design Review Process  
and  
Appendices*



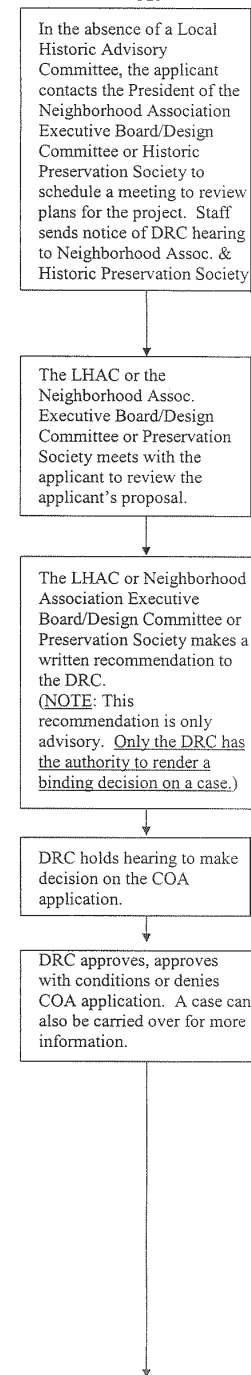
# City of Birmingham

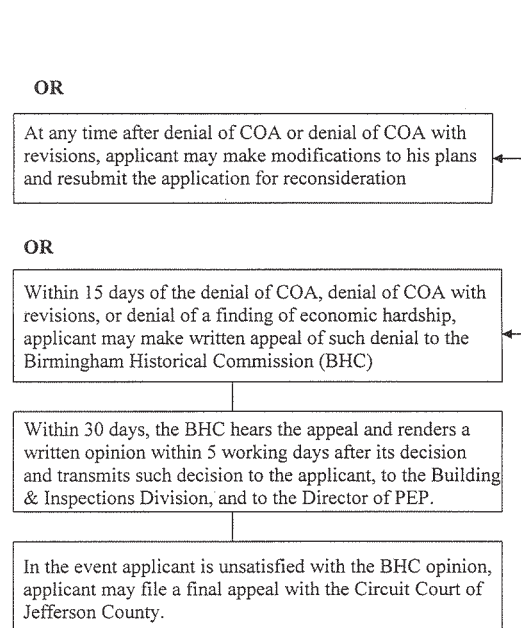
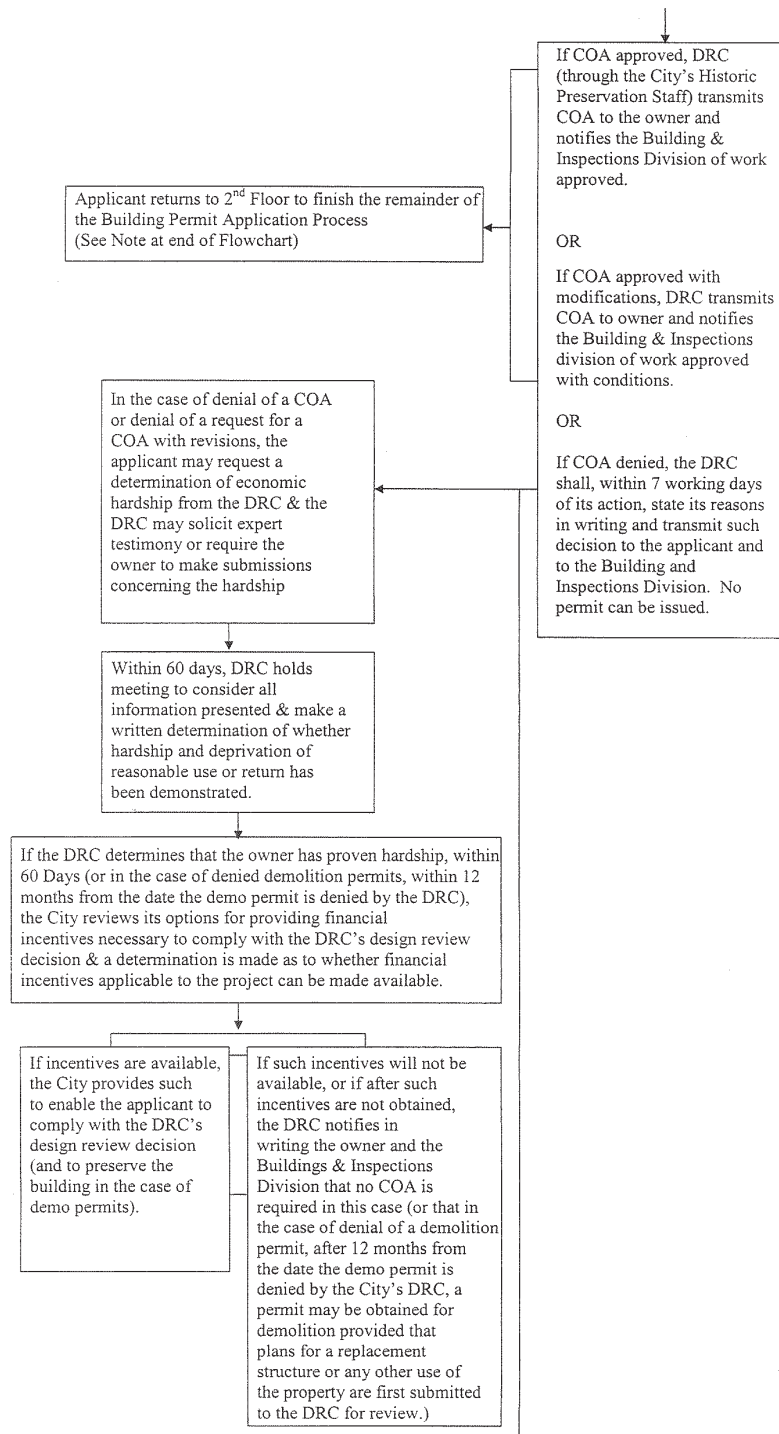
## FLOWCHART OF THE DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

### For Owners of Properties in Local Historic Districts



OR





#### NOTES:

- Once a Building Permit is issued, construction must begin within 6 months and be completed within 18 months after the COA has been issued. Extensions of time may be obtained after good cause is shown. If construction does not begin within the stated time period, the COA shall expire and become void.
- After the DRC approves a project and construction begins, it will be the owner's responsibility to bring the building into compliance with the plans approved by the DRC. If, at any time, the construction is found not to be in compliance with approved plans, then the Building & Inspections Division issues a stop work order until plans that would bring the building into compliance are presented to the DRC.
  - After the work is completed, it is inspected for compliance with the design review decision, and if construction is completed and found to be in violation, then the owner is cited in writing and given 30 days to bring property into compliance OR bring plans to DRC and present sufficient justification for unapproved changes. If necessary after reviewing the unapproved changes, the DRC shall provide written directives as to how to rectify the violations and shall establish a deadline by which the building shall be brought into compliance.

## Appendix A: Sample Design Review Documents

### WAIVER APPLICATION

(Waiver of the Design Review Requirement for Cases in Local Historic Districts)  
CITY OF BIRMINGHAM \* URBAN DESIGN DIVISION

Please Print Legibly

Name of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address (including zip code): \_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship of Applicant to Property: \_\_\_\_\_ Owner \_\_\_\_\_ Architect/Contractor \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Full Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Local Historic District: \_\_\_\_\_ Anderson Place \_\_\_\_\_ Avondale Park \_\_\_\_\_ Cullom St \_\_\_\_\_ Forest Park \_\_\_\_\_  
Highland Park \_\_\_\_\_ Phelan Park \_\_\_\_\_ Red Mountain Suburbs \_\_\_\_\_ Roebuck Springs \_\_\_\_\_

Permit Routing Number: \_\_\_\_\_ STAFF USE ONLY  
Tax Map/Parcel Identification Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Building/Demo/Sign/Fence/Soil Erosion Control Permit Application (circle one): \_\_\_\_\_  
Present Zoning Classification of Property: \_\_\_\_\_  
Present Use of Property: \_\_\_\_\_ Residential \_\_\_\_\_ Commercial \_\_\_\_\_ Industrial \_\_\_\_\_ Institutional \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Nature of Proposed Work:

Please describe your proposed work as simply and accurately as possible.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Is there an application relevant to this property and to the subject modifications or improvements pending or contemplated before the Board of Zoning Appeals, City Planning Commission or City Council?

☐ Yes. Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ No

Is there any approval pending by any other regulatory or administrative authority, which may have a bearing on the modifications or improvements that are the subject of this application?

☐ Yes. Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ No

#### CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that I have read this application and that all information contained herein is true. If any portion of this information, intentionally or unintentionally, is false or is a misrepresentation of the material facts, the Waiver granted will be void. I further certify that if I am not the owner, I have proper authorization from the owner to act as representative on his/her behalf and that I may be required to provide written documentation of such authorization to the City of Birmingham.

Signature of Owner (where applicable): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant (if different from owner) as Agent on Behalf of Owner: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### FOR STAFF USE ONLY

**Memorandum to Permitting Official: A Waiver of review by the Design Review Committee has been:**

       **Approved.** Please release the building/demo/sign/fence/soil erosion control permit (circle one) in accordance with the following conditions:

Minimum repairs approved under the design review guidelines for the subject local historic district:

\_\_\_\_\_

Allowable method by which such repairs can be accomplished:

\_\_\_\_\_

       **Denied.** Please do not release the permit or allow work.

City Historic Preservation Officer or City Historic Preservation Planner \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM \* DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE

Please Print Legibly

Name of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address (including zip code): \_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship of Applicant to Property: \_\_\_\_\_ Owner \_\_\_\_\_ Architect/Contractor \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
Owner's Name (if different from applicant): \_\_\_\_\_  
Owner's Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Owner's Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Local Historic District: \_\_\_\_\_ Anderson Place \_\_\_\_\_ Avondale Park \_\_\_\_\_ Cullom St \_\_\_\_\_ Forest Park \_\_\_\_\_  
Highland Park \_\_\_\_\_ Phelan Park \_\_\_\_\_ Red Mountain Suburbs \_\_\_\_\_ Roebuck Springs \_\_\_\_\_

Permit Routing Number: \_\_\_\_\_ STAFF USE ONLY  
Tax Map/Parcel Identification Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Building, Demolition, Sign, Fence, or Soil Erosion Control Permit Application: \_\_\_\_\_  
Present Zoning Classification of Property: \_\_\_\_\_  
Present Use of Property: \_\_\_\_\_ Residential \_\_\_\_\_ Commercial \_\_\_\_\_ Industrial \_\_\_\_\_ Institutional \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Nature of Proposed Work:

Please describe your proposed work as simply and accurately as possible.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Is there an application relevant to this property and to the subject modifications or improvements pending or contemplated before the Board of Zoning Appeals, City Planning Commission or City Council?

☐ Yes. Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ No

Is there any approval pending by any other regulatory or administrative authority, which may have a bearing on the modifications or improvements that are the subject of this application?

☐ Yes. Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ No

Who will represent applicant before the Design Review Committee? (Representative should have authority to commit applicant to make changes that may be suggested or required by the DRC):

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
TITLE OR RELATIONSHIP TO APPLICANT (if other than applicant): \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS (including zip code): \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

#### CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that I have read this application and that all information contained herein is true. If any portion of this information, intentionally or unintentionally, is false or is a misrepresentation of the material facts, the Certificate of Appropriateness granted will be void. I further certify that if I am not the owner, I have proper authorization from the owner to act as representative on his/her behalf and that I may be required to provide written documentation of such authorization to the City of Birmingham.

Signature of Owner (where applicable): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant (if different from owner) as Agent on Behalf of Owner: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### FOR STAFF USE ONLY

**Memorandum to Permitting Official: A Certificate of Appropriateness has been:**

       **Approved.** Please release the building/demo/sign/fence/soil erosion control (circle one) permit in accordance with the following conditions noted in Permit Plan.

\_\_\_\_\_

       **Denied.** Please do not release the permit or allow work.

City Historic Preservation Officer or City Historic Preservation Planner \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## DESIGN REVIEW SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PROPOSALS IN LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

**NOTE:** Prior to the City's Design Review Committee meeting to consider the case, the pertinent documentation listed below (except for material samples) should be submitted to the Urban Design Division with the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness. Material samples do not have to be submitted to staff in advance, but can be presented at the Design Review Committee meeting. In order for the Design Review Committee to properly review your proposal, please insure that your presentation includes the items noted below. Please also insure that your proposal conforms to the applicable Design Review Guidelines for your district.

For the City's DRC meeting, please submit 10 submittal packages that include 11x17 copies of the site plan, elevation drawings, landscape plan (if applicable), and color rendering, and 8.5 x 11 copies of the color photographs and any other applicable information, as indicated below.

### REMODELING AND ADDITIONS:

- Scaled (see Note 1) elevation drawings indicating the proposed alterations or additions, clearly indicating the existing building and what is proposed.
- Scaled (see Note 1) color rendering showing the proposed alterations or additions in the actual color(s) proposed. Wall signs, if any, on building(s) are to be included on the rendering.
- Dimensioned site plan to scale (see Note 1) showing: 1) dimensions of lot, 2) location and dimensions of existing building(s), 3) location and dimensions of addition, and 4) location of all exterior, ground and roof mounted equipment, including fences and dumpster enclosures.
- Actual manufacturer's material samples for shingles, brick, stone, mortar, paint, stain, stucco, lighting, etc. (See Note 2)
- Color photographs of existing conditions from all sides.
- Historic plans, elevations or photographs if the request is to return a structure to an earlier historic appearance.

### NEW CONSTRUCTION:

- Scaled (see Note 1) elevation drawings indicating the proposed building.
- Scaled (see Note 1) color rendering showing the proposed building in the actual color(s) proposed. Wall signs, if any, on building(s) are to be included on the rendering.
- Dimensioned site plan to scale (see Note 1) showing: 1) dimensions of lot, 2) location and dimensions of existing building(s), if any, 3) location and dimensions of proposed building(s), and 4) if proposed, location of parking areas, fencing, dumpster enclosures, and all roof or ground mounted equipment.
- Actual manufacturer's material samples for shingles, brick, stone, mortar, paint, stain, stucco, lighting, etc. (See Note 2)
- Color photographs of the proposed site and the structures within the vicinity of the new building.
- Scaled landscape plan showing location, sizes, species, and plant spacing of all landscaping and plant materials to be used, as well as location/size/type of existing trees that will remain and existing trees that will be removed (if any).

### RELOCATION:

- Photograph of structure on current site.
- Reason for request to move building.
- Dimensioned site plan to scale (see Note 1) showing proposed building on new site.
- Elevation showing height and width of structure on new site.
- Color photographs of structures within vicinity of new site.

### DEMOLITION:

- Color photographs (exterior and interior) depicting the current state of the structure. Photographs and drawings must clearly label areas of structural deterioration.

- Drawings to adequately describe site use after demolition (i.e., the same site plan, elevation drawing, and color rendering submittals required for new construction projects, as indicated above).
- Scaled landscape plan showing location, sizes, species, and plant spacing of all landscaping and plant materials to be used.
- Documentation from a qualified real estate appraiser or licensed restoration contractor that the historic building can not be adaptively reused or a structural report by a licensed structural engineer or a licensed restoration contractor that the building is incapable of being repaired.

### STUCCO, PAINTING, REPOINTING:

- Color photographs of all areas involved and surrounding structures if applicable.
- Actual manufacturer's material/color samples for shingles, brick, stone, mortar, paint, stain, stucco, lighting, etc. (See Note 2)

### FENCES AND LANDSCAPING:

- Site plan showing location of fence or landscaping.
- Dimensioned elevations and section to scale (see Note 1), showing design of fence and material (see Note 2).
- Scaled landscape plan showing location, sizes, species, and plant spacing of all landscaping and plant materials to be used, as well as location/size/type of existing trees that will remain and existing trees that will be removed (if any).
- Photograph of the area to be fenced or landscaped.

### AWNINGS:

- Photograph of building elevation to which awning is to be attached.
- Scaled, color rendered drawing (showing the actual colors) noting dimensions, signage, and location on building of each awning.
- Description of awning attachment and lighting
- Actual manufacturer's color and material samples

### SIGNAGE:

- Scaled, color rendered drawings showing the actual colors and showing the dimensions of each sign, including mounting heights, overall height of pole signs, and dimensions and spacing of text.
- Scaled elevation or site plan showing location of each sign on site or on building. Include dimension for front linear feet (straight line length) of the building. For corner properties show dimension of both fronts that face streets.
- Description of construction, method of illumination, and mounting.
- Calculation of total aggregate area of proposed signs and any existing signs.
- Scaled landscaping plan for monument and pole signs showing all sizes, species, and plant spacing.
- Actual manufacturer's color and material samples.

### LIGHTING:

- Location of surface mounted lights.
- Location of all light standards.
- Design of all light standards.
- Distribution of light wash on surfaces.
- Indication of all readable light sources from public right of way.

### GENERAL NOTES:

- Note 1: Minimum scale of 1"=30' on all plans, elevations, and section details of new cornices, columns, railings or any other distinctive details, unless otherwise approved.
- Note 2: When material descriptions are required, the actual materials to be used must be designated on the elevation drawings.
- Note 3: All plans shall include a north arrow, preferably oriented towards the top of the sheet, and a legend identifying any symbols.



## Appendix B: The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties were developed to help protect our nation's irreplaceable cultural resources by promoting consistent preservation practices. The Standards may be applied to all properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places: buildings, sites, structures, objects, and districts.

The Standards are a series of concepts about maintaining, repairing and replacing historic materials, as well as designing new additions or making alterations. There are Standards for four distinct, but interrelated, approaches to the treatment of historic properties--preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction.

In addition to the required design review guidelines contained in the Historic Preservation Plan for each local historic district, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties may be used by anyone planning and undertaking work on historic properties. The "Standards for Rehabilitation" cited in 36 CFR 67 should always be used when property owners are seeking certification for Federal tax benefits. Illustrated guidelines for interpreting the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties may be found at <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standguide/index.htm>.

### STANDARDS FOR PRESERVATION

**Preservation** is defined as the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. New exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment; however, the limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project.

1. A property will be used as it was historically, or be given a new use that maximizes the retention of distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relation-

ships. Where a treatment and use have not been identified, a property will be protected and, if necessary, stabilized until additional work may be undertaken.

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The replacement of intact or repairable historic materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate, and conserve existing historic materials and features will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection, and properly documented for future research.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. The existing condition of historic features will be evaluated to determine the appropriate level of intervention needed. Where the severity of deterioration requires repair or limited replacement of a distinctive feature, the new material will match the old in composition, design, color, and texture.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

**Preservation as a Treatment:** When the property's distinctive materials, features, and spaces are essentially intact and thus convey the historic significance without extensive repair or replacement, when depiction at a particular period of time is not appropriate, and when a continuing or new use does not require additions or extensive alterations, Preservation may be considered as a treatment.

## STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

**Rehabilitation** is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be under taken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

**Rehabilitation as a Treatment:** When repair and replacement of deteriorated features are necessary; when alterations or additions to the property are planned for a new or continued use; and when its depiction at a particular period of time is not appropriate, Rehabilitation may be considered as a treatment.

## STANDARDS FOR RESTORATION

**Restoration** is defined as the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project.

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use which reflects the property's restoration period.
2. Materials and features from the restoration period will be retained and preserved. The removal of materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize the period will not be undertaken.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate and conserve materials and features from the restoration period will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection, and properly documented for future research.

4. *Materials, features, spaces, and finishes that characterize other historical periods will be documented prior to their alteration or removal.*
5. *Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize the restoration period will be preserved.*
6. *Deteriorated features from the restoration period will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials.*
7. *Replacement of missing features from the restoration period will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence. A false sense of history will not be created by adding conjectural features, features from other properties, or by combining features that never existed together historically.*
8. *Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.*
9. *Archeological resources affected by a project will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.*
10. *Designs that were never executed historically will not be constructed.*

**Restoration as a Treatment:** *When the property's design, architectural, or historical significance during a particular period of time outweighs the potential loss of extant materials, features, spaces, and finishes that characterize other historical periods; when there is substantial physical and documentary evidence for the work; and when contemporary alterations and additions are not planned, Restoration may be considered as a treatment. Prior to undertaking work, a particular period of time, i.e., the restoration period, should be selected and justified, and a documentation plan for Restoration developed.*

## STANDARDS FOR RECONSTRUCTION

**Reconstruction** is defined as the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location.

1. *Reconstruction will be used to depict vanished or non-surviving portions a property when documentary and physical evidence is available to permit accurate reconstruction with minimal conjecture, and such reconstruction is essential to the public understanding of the property.*
2. *Reconstruction of a landscape, building, structure, or object in its historic location will be preceded by a thorough archeological investigation to identify and evaluate those features and artifacts which are essential to an accurate reconstruction. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.*
3. *Reconstruction will include measures to preserve any remaining historic materials, features, and spatial relationships.*
4. *Reconstruction will be based on the accurate duplication of historic features and elements substantiated by documentary or physical evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different features from other historic properties. A reconstructed property will re-create the appearance of the non-surviving historic property in materials, design, color, and texture.*
5. *A reconstruction will be clearly identified as a contemporary re-creation.*
6. *Designs that were never executed historically will not be constructed.*

**Reconstruction as a Treatment:** *When a contemporary depiction is required to understand and interpret a property's historic value (including the re-creation of missing components in a historic district or site ); when no other property with the same associative value has survived; and when sufficient historical documentation exists to ensure an accurate reproduction, Reconstruction may be considered as a treatment.*



**Appendix C:**  
**Contacts and Informational Resources**  
**for Owners of Historic Properties**

**Recommended Contacts:**

**City of Birmingham**

Birmingham Historical Commission  
Dept. of Planning, Engineering & Permits  
710 North 20th Street  
Room 500 City Hall  
Birmingham, AL 35203  
Phone: 205-254-2479

(Contact about local historic districts, historic properties, design review, design guidelines, and commercial revitalization districts.)

**Birmingham Historical Society**

One Sloss Quarters  
Birmingham, AL 35222  
Phone: 205-251-1880  
[www.bhistorical.org](http://www.bhistorical.org)

**Jefferson County Historical Commission**

1731 1st Avenue North  
Birmingham, AL 35203  
Phone: 205-324-0988  
[www.jeffersonhistorical.org](http://www.jeffersonhistorical.org)  
(Contact about Historical Plaques.)

**Alabama Historical Commission**

468 South Perry Street  
Montgomery, AL 36130-0900  
Phone: 334-242-3184  
[www.preserveala.org](http://www.preserveala.org)

(Contact about historic tax credits, archaeological inquiries, and questions and expert essays about preservation methods for historic structures.)

**National Park Service**

Heritage Preservation Services  
1849 C Street NW (2255)  
Washington, D.C. 20240  
Phone: 202-513-7270  
[www.cr.nps.gov](http://www.cr.nps.gov)

**National Trust for Historic Preservation**

1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20036-2117  
Phone: 1-800-944-6847  
[www.nationaltrust.org](http://www.nationaltrust.org)

**Informational Resources:**

Bowman, Camille. **Handbook for Owners of Alabama's Historic Houses: A Basic Guide to Resources.** Montgomery: Alabama Historical Commission, 2001.

Burkhardt, Ann McCorquodale, and Alice Meriwether Bowsber.  
**House Detective: A Guide to Researching Birmingham Buildings.**  
Birmingham: Birmingham Historical Society, 1988.

**Preservation Briefs** published by the National Park Service

This series includes over forty topics with technical guidance on preserving, rehabilitating, and restoring historic building.  
<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/presbhbm.htm>

**Preservation Tech Notes** (Case Studies in Historic Preservation) published by the National Park Service

These case studies provide practical information on traditional practices and innovative techniques for successfully maintaining and preserving cultural resources.  
<http://www.nps.gov/history/tps/technotes/tnhome.htm>

*The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties*

*This publication includes illustrated guidelines for the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction of historic properties. It includes Recommended and Not Recommended treatment approaches.*

*<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standguide/index.htm>*

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