

V. PROTECTING NEWBERRY'S HISTORIC RESOURCES - THE DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

How Does the Certificate of Appropriateness Process Work?

Property owners within the Core Commercial (CC) District of Newberry are required to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) prior to making any changes to the exterior of the property or undertaking new construction or demolition. It is necessary to obtain a COA before the property owner will receive a Building Permit. A COA is a form issued to ensure that the exterior work planned for a building's rehabilitation or new construction meets the criteria of the design guidelines. A Building Permit is a separate form and type of review which, in addition to meeting the design guidelines, also ensures the structural soundness and safety of the building. A COA may also be necessary for some actions where a Building Permit is not required such as new signs or awnings.

Step One – When is a COA required?

Within the Newberry CC area, a COA is required for the following:

- ❖ Any construction, alteration, demolition, or removal which requires a building or demolition permit such as construction of any additions to buildings, demolishing buildings, or moving buildings.
- ❖ Construction, alteration, demolition, or removal of structure(s) or appurtenances, any of which affect the exterior architectural appearance of a property, but not requiring a building permit.
- ❖ Maintenance, such as, painting surfaces, window/door repair, and masonry repair.
- ❖ The addition or replacement of new signs including signage painted directly on the building or its storefronts; the addition or replacement of awnings including decoration or signage attached or painted directly on the awning, and; light fixtures.

Step Two - Completing a COA Application

Obtain a COA prior to beginning the work.

Prior to the issuance of a Building or Demolition Permit or prior to any demolition, new construction, alteration, modification or addition to a structure within the Historic Buildings District, a COA from the Architectural Review Board (ARB) is required. Approvals are granted by the ARB through the issuance of a COA. A chart is included in the appendix which shows the type of work which would typically require a COA as well as those that require Building Permits.

The ARB will make their decisions on COA applications based on the design guidelines in this manual. These guidelines provide the ARB with information to determine the architectural compatibility of proposed changes. They also guide property owners on rehabilitation and appropriate new construction. COA applications are available at the Newberry City Hall.

Required documentation for a COA should include:

- For **new construction (including outbuildings) or extensive renovation**, provide two

sets of plans and specifications signed by an architect or draftsman as applicable. Plans should be drawn to scale and include a site plan showing all existing and proposed improvements. Provide specifications and/or samples of exterior materials such as siding, roofing, doors, windows, lighting and ornamentation. Attach photographs of the lot and any existing buildings on the lot or adjoining lots;

- For **rehabilitation or repair**, provide detailed drawings of proposed modifications to the structure. Attach photographs of the existing building along with specifications and/or samples of exterior materials (such as siding, roofing, doors, windows, and ornamentation);
- For **painting and paint removal**, provide samples of paint colors and/or a description of the proposed methods for paint removal from the building material;
- For **signs**, provide scale drawings of the sign to show the size of the sign and its lettering. Provide any pictures or symbols which will be on the sign. Attach drawings or photographs showing the sign location on the building or site and neighboring buildings. Color samples should also be submitted;
- For **parking areas, driveways, or parking lots**, provide a plat of survey to show the location and layout of the parking lot and landscaping. Drawings should clearly indicate the dimensions of the parking stall(s) drive aisles, and setbacks. The placement and design of light standards or fixtures should be provided. Information on the plants proposed for the landscaping should also be submitted;
- For **demolition**, provide photographs of the building proposed for demolition along with a statement describing the reasons for demolition and proposed use of the site. Photographs should also be provided of neighboring buildings or lots.

Step Three - Submitting the COA Application and Meet With City Staff

Once a property owner has completed a COA application form, a meeting with the staff at either the Economic Development or Building and Zoning Office is recommended. The staff in these offices will meet with you to discuss your project, answer questions, and advise you on whether or not your plans meet the design guidelines. If there is a conflict between your plans and the guidelines, the staff can offer advice on how to modify them. If the staff feels the work requires review by the ARB, the application will be scheduled for its next regular meeting.

- Upon approval, the staff issues the COA which includes a list of approved work. A copy of this COA application is located in Appendix B.
- If a COA is denied to a property owner or if the property owner feels that the requirements are unsatisfactory, he or she may work with the ARB to amend a project so that it meets the guidelines. The ARB is available as a resource to residents for advice on appropriate designs and available products.
- The ARB will consider substantial hardship and other factors that may affect an owner's ability to undertake and complete rehabilitation or other work considered.

- Appeals of ARB decisions may be made to the Courts of South Carolina pursuant to the South Carolina Code of Laws.

Step Four - Obtain a Building Permit

Building permits (if required) are available at the Building and Zoning Office at City Hall.

Step Five - Begin Work

If your plans change while work is in progress, contact the Economic Development or Building and Zoning Office staff **BEFORE** undertaking a change or deviation from the COA. Work undertaken contrary to original approval in a COA or beyond the scope of the COA requires approval from the ARB. If a violation is discovered or reported, the following steps may be taken:

- The Building and Zoning Office may issue a Stop Work Order. At this point the property owner should obtain COA approval of the work from the ARB. If the work does not meet the design guidelines, the ARB may require that the work be redone.
- If the property owner does not respond to the Stop Work Order, the Building and Zoning Office may issue a citation for violating the ordinance. This will outline deadlines for responding. If the property owner still does not respond, the Building and Zoning Office may issue a citation to appear in court and institute fines.