



City of Fall River
Massachusetts

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

JASIEL F. CORREIA II
Mayor

Kristen Cantara Oliveira
Chair

PROCEDURES FOR FILING APPLICATIONS

- A. Be prepared to apply for approvals well in advance of commencing any exterior work. Before making any changes to the exterior of a property in an historic district, the owner should call the Commission to discuss proposed alterations and to determine the category of the application (Appropriateness, Non-Applicability or Hardship).
- B. The Commission normally meets on the third Tuesday of each month and notices are posted at City Hall. The meetings are held at One Government Center and begins at 7:00pm. All meetings are open to the public and any person is entitled to appear and be heard on any matter before the Commission before it reaches a decision.
- C. An application for a Certificate of Appropriateness or Hardship must be received by 3:00pm 14 days before the meeting in order to make the agenda. An application for a Certificate of Non-Applicability may normally be added to the agenda up to 2 business days before the day of the meeting.
- D. All applications for Certificates of Appropriateness or Hardship require a public hearing. Notice of all hearings must be posted with the City Clerk at least 14 days before the hearing and abutters must be notified in writing. Additionally, public hearings need to be posted in the local newspaper. A public hearing is not required for a Certificate of Non-Applicability.
- E. Applications must be submitted by the Owner of the property. A contractor for the owner, at the owner's request, may submit an application on the owner's behalf. In case of a tenant, a waiver of the owner's appearance may be granted at the discretion of the Commission if it requested by the Owner.
- F. All applications must include photos of existing conditions, taken from all public ways. No certificates can be issued until receipt of photos.
- G. An application will not be considered complete unless all work items are thoroughly described on scale drawings and include specifications regarding dimensions, materials, and any other information needed for the Commission to visualize the changes in order to make a determination. The following items should be included



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in your drawings as applicable (exhibits should be 8 ½ x 11 or be able to be folded to 8 ½ x 11):

1. Site plan showing location of improvements;
 2. Elevation drawings of the specific improvements;
 3. Details/profiles (i.e. moldings, fences, cornices, vents, etc.);
 4. Materials (i.e. wood, brick, etc.);
 5. Dimensions (i.e. size of trim); and
 6. Transformers, heat pump and condenser locations, electrical entries and meters, lamp posts, stove pipes.
- H. At the hearing, the Commission will discuss the application with the applicant or his/her representative, hear the abutters and take a vote. Owners having professional consultants such as architects or contractors are urged to have them be present at the hearing. If the application is approved, a Certificate will be mailed to the mailing address provided on the application and copies will be sent to the City Clerk and Building Commissioner. Please note that the application can be continued until the next meeting if the Commission deems necessary (i.e. for reasons of incomplete drawings, to perform site visit, etc.). In any case, the Commission must make a determination within 60 days from the date the application is received, unless the applicant waives that requirement in writing.
- I. A property Owner or a Contractor cannot receive a building permit unless a Certificate has been issued. Please be sure to obtain appropriate permits from the Inspector of Buildings (or other necessary permits and approvals) prior to commencing work.
- J. The homeowner may opt not to commence the work approved (unless it relates to resolving an outstanding violation). Work commenced must be completed within one year from the Certificate date unless otherwise indicated.
- K. The City of Fall River reserves the right to inspect the property to determine compliance with the conditions set forth in the Certificate issued.



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Violations

A person commencing or completing work to the exterior of a building in a Local Historic District without the necessary approval of the Commission is subject to fines of up to \$300 per day from date of violation. The Commission is not responsible for an owner's neglect to inquire about the necessary City permits and approvals. All records are public and we will confidentially assist you if you are concerned that someone in your neighborhood is in violation.

Assistance

The Commission's guidelines will be available for viewing at the City of Fall River Historic District Commission office or on-line at our City's website. The guidelines provide examples of what is historically appropriate) or inappropriate) for Fall River's neighborhoods including trim, siding, barrier free access, doors, fences, gutters/downspouts, masonry, mechanical equipment, parking solutions, porches/steps, roofing, satellite dishes & solar energy systems, secondary egress, skylights, utilities, windows, etc. These guidelines help you understand what changes are likely or unlikely to be approved. The Commission supports your efforts to improve your property and can guide you on historical appropriateness. Further information, including City-wide architectural inventories, is available.

For more information, contact the Clerk of the Historic District Commission at One Government Center, 5th Floor, Fall River, MA 02720; tel. 508-324-2530