Historic Preservation Submittal Requirements

City of Somerville
Planning, Preservation, & Zoning (PPZ) Division

These instructions cover the application processes for the two types of applications reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC):

1. **changes a designated Local Historic District (LHD) property**
2. **the demolition of a structure that is 75 years of age or older.**

This document may be periodically updated, so please access the online version of these instructions when submitting an application rather than a saved or printed copy.

I. GETTING STARTED

General

As of July 5, 2023, all applications to the HPC regarding items 1 and 2 above, are required to be submitted electronically using the Citizenserve permitting portal. **Emailed and hard copies of applications will no longer be accepted**. The Citizenserve permitting portal can be accessed by clicking the "Citizenserve" icon on the Inspectional Services Department (ISD) web page or through the same link on the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) web page.

Creating and Using a Citizenserve Account

If you have never used the Citizenserve permitting portal for any type of building permit or license in Somerville, you will need to create a one-time account. You can do so by accessing the Citizenserve portal through the ISD or HPC web pages and follow the prompts to create an account. You will receive both on-screen and an email confirmation that your account has been created. Applicants who already have created a Citizenserve account for other purposes may continue to use that account for Historic Preservation-related applications as well.

You will use your Citizenserve account to submit and amend applications to the HPC and to communicate with Preservation Planning Staff about your application. Legal ad fees will also be able to be paid through Citizenserve; once Preservation Planning Staff has determined if legal ads are necessary, they will add the fee to your Citizenserve historic case file. All communications between you and Preservation Planning Staff regarding your application will occur through the messaging tool within Citizenserve.

II. ALTERING A LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT (LHD) PROPERTY

Any work performed on an LHD property requires some type of Certificate from the HPC or its staff. To submit an application, log into the Citizenserve permitting portal by following the links thereto from the ISD or HPC web pages. Note that when accessing the portal from the ISD web page, select "**Apply for a Permit**" under the **Permitting by Building Department and Engineering Departme**nt header.

Follow the Prompts

When prompted by the system, select "**Historic Permit**" from the "Project Type" drop-down field. At the following prompt, select "**Historic Alteration**" from the drop-down field. Continue to follow the prompts from the system in order to submit your project materials.

Required and Additional Application Materials

While there are standard fields that are required for all application types, please note that the submission process is an iterative one and that, based on the nature of your project, you will likely be required to submit additional material as required by Preservation Planning Staff.

Communicating About Your Application

As noted earlier, all communication, including questions, about your submission will occur within the Citizenserve by using its messaging function. Please note that this is not an "instant message" type of feature. When Staff has left a message for you, Citizenserve will send an email message to let you know. Staff is unable to answer questions regarding when your application will be processed or how long the process will take.

II. DEMOLITION OF A STRUCTURE 75 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER

Follow the Prompts

When prompted by the system, select "**Historic Permit**" from the "Project Type" drop-down field. At the following prompt, select "**Demolition Review**" from the drop-down field. Continue to follow the prompts from the system in order to submit your project materials.

Required and Additional Application Materials

While there are standard fields that are required for all application types, please note that the submission process is an iterative one and that, based on the nature of your project, you will likely be required to submit additional material as required by Preservation Planning Staff.

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