



# HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

City of Battle Creek, Planning and Community Development Department

Commerce Pointe Bldg., 77 East Michigan Avenue, Ste. 140

Battle Creek, Michigan 49017

Phone: (269) 966-3320

Fax: (269) 966-3529

## **APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION OF APPROPRIATENESS**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant/Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Property Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address for Correspondence (If different from property address): \_\_\_\_\_

Applicants Role: *Owner* \_\_\_\_\_ *Architect* \_\_\_\_\_ *Contractor* \_\_\_\_\_ *Other:* \_\_\_\_\_

HUD Funded: *Yes* \_\_\_\_\_ *No* \_\_\_\_\_ In a Historic District: *Yes* \_\_\_\_\_ *No* \_\_\_\_\_

On or before date of completion of proposed work, the building will have a code compliant smoke detector or fire alarm system? *Yes* \_\_\_\_\_ *No* \_\_\_\_\_

### **DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:**

### **Instructions:**

- **The Commission will not consider an application with inadequate or unclear information.** Review your application with City staff in advance to be sure it is complete.
- **The property owner or person authorized to act on the owner's behalf must attend the Historic District Commission (HDC) meeting when this application is considered.** If an authorized representative will be attending a letter of authorization must be included with this application.
- **Provide drawings that explain what is proposed. Elevations are required for all projects.** Include plans, site plan, details, specifications, and product information as needed.
- **ONE set of drawings on 8 ½ x 11 paper is strongly recommended.** This set will be copied and distributed in the HDC packets. For larger drawings, colored prints, or anything that cannot be copied by staff, submit 10 copies of each item.
- **Indicate all dimensions.** Drawings should be to scale.
- **Submit one copy of the following photos:** All four elevations of the building (straight on shots of all four sides of the building), a historical photo of the property (check the Willard Library 1940 picture file), and a street photo showing adjacent structures to the property.
- **Provide specific information on all materials:** Manufacture's names, illustrations, specifications, and samples. Material information should be submitted with this application. All samples (paint color chips, shingles, etc.) should be brought to the meeting.
- **Indicate not only the immediate area of the work, but also how it relates to the building as a whole.** Enlarged photocopies of photographs with the proposed changes drawn in may be helpful.
- **For new construction, indicate both in plan and elevation how the project will relate to the surrounding streetscape.**
- **Proposed demolition should include estimates for the complete repair of the property.**
- **For smaller projects** staff can provide information on previous HDC decisions as a guide to what may be acceptable. For complex projects such as additions, applicants are encouraged to consider seeking the advice and expertise of an architect familiar with historic preservation.

# Historic District Commission

## Application for Determination of Appropriateness

### FAQ's

#### ***Why do I have to apply to the Historic District Commission (HDC) to work on my house or commercial building?***

By city ordinance, all proposed modifications affecting the exterior appearance of buildings located in a *locally* designated portion of an Historic District must first be reviewed and approved by the HDC.

This is to assure that modifications and improvements do not compromise the historical integrity of the building or of the district it is located in.

#### ***What do I need to do for the Historic District Commission to review my modifications?***

The “Application for Determination of Appropriateness” includes a detailed list of information you should prepare for the HDC.

#### ***Can I demolish a building in an historic district?***

There are often situations in which the quality and/or condition of a structure may make demolition an appropriate solution to a problem. In general, however, the HDC encourages creative rehabilitation and adaptive re-use solutions before demolition is proposed – demolition is an irreversible action and all viable alternatives should be considered first.

#### **Guidelines for determining if a building in a local historic district can be demolished include:**

- The structure is of minimal historic and/or architectural significance
- The demolition will have no adverse impact on the adjacent area or upon the historic district as a whole
- The property is a hazard to the safety of the public or occupants
- The property is a deterrent to a major improvement program which will be of substantial benefit to the community
- Retention of the property will cause undue financial hardship to the owner. If claiming undue financial hardship, you will need to provide the following:
  - Cost of rehabbing the property
  - Cost of demolition
  - Market prices of structures in the neighborhood
  - Clear photographs detailing the current condition of the house (interior and exterior)

#### ***What if I want to build something new within a Historic District?***

The HDC encourages new building and development that will be harmonious with the existing historic buildings and neighborhoods, but not necessarily of the same architectural style.

Elements looked at to determine compatibility include form, mass, proportion, configuration, building material, texture, location on the site, and landscaping.

As with any new building, all zoning and building requirements (such as setbacks, height, parking, building materials, etc.) must be met.

***When does the HDC meet? Do I have to go to the meeting?***

The HDC meets the second Monday of each month at 4:00 p.m. in the Chamber of Commerce Board Room located at Commerce Pointe, 77 E. Michigan Avenue (lower level). In order to have your application considered you must have it submitted to our office by the petition deadline date which is approximately 20 days prior to the meeting date for that month (please contact the Planning Department for specific submittal deadline dates). You must attend the meeting in order to address any questions the Historic District Commission may have.

***Who can I call with questions?***

You may contact the Planning Department at 269-966-3320, 77 E. Michigan Avenue, Suite 140, Commerce Pointe, Battle Creek, Michigan.

