

Historic Preservation Commission

Prince George's County, Maryland

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Procedures for the Establishment and Operation of Local Advisory Committees (LACs)

I. Authorization

Pursuant to the Prince George's County Historic Preservation Ordinance, Section 29-106, "Powers and Duties of the Commission" the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is authorized "to appoint members to Local Advisory Committees to assist and advise the Commission in the performance of its functions."

The Adopted and Approved *Historic Sites and Districts Plan, 1981* states (p. 90):

"Local Historic District Advisory Committees to the Historic Preservation Commission may be appropriate in some cases, and citizen groups and municipalities may wish to make recommendations to the Historic Preservation Commission on the appointment of the advisory committee members."

The Historic Preservation Commission may establish LACs in areas of potential Historic Districts.

II. Purpose

- To assist and advise the Historic Preservation Commission in the performance of its duties;
- To serve as the liaison between historic district residents and the HPC;
- To act as the "educational arm" of the HPC within a historic district.

III. Membership

Number: A LAC will consist of from 5-11 members, the majority of whom will be residents of the historic district which they represent. Representatives of organizations concerned with the protection of the historic district may be appointed; each organizational representative may have an alternate, with voting privileges at meetings that the member cannot attend.

Terms: The term of membership shall be 3 years, with the terms of initial appointees being staggered so that no more than 3 appointments shall expire in any one year.

Appointment Procedures: Appointments of members and alternates will be made by the HPC, with the advice of local civic groups, municipal officials, and other organizations concerned with the protection and maintenance of the historic district. The comments of the appropriate groups will be solicited early in the appointment process.

Once appointed, new LAC members should attend a HPC meeting at the earliest possible date for orientation purposes. The HPC will schedule a special meeting with all LACs at least once a year. Vacancies on the Committee should be filled within 30 days after they occur. In the case of expiration of terms, members may continue to serve until their successors are appointed.

Qualifications: At least one member should have, by special interest, experience or training, expertise in architecture or architectural history. The remaining members shall be selected because of their interest, experience and training in such areas as history, planning, real estate, construction techniques, urban design and preservation, or because they represent a civic organization or other organizational entity concerned with the protection and maintenance of the historic district.

Termination of Appointments: In keeping with the HPC Rules of Procedure, appointments may be terminated by the HPC if the appointee fails to attend three consecutive scheduled LAC meetings.

IV. Meetings

LACs will hold meetings as necessary, at least one week before the date of the monthly HPC meeting. All meetings will be open to the public and held in a public place such as a church or school. If possible, notice of LAC meetings will appear in the local newspaper at least one week before the meeting date. Minutes of all meetings shall be recorded and kept on file for public inspection and copies shall be forwarded to the HPC.

V. Responsibilities

Each LAC shall, in its capacity as an advisory body to the HPC:

1. Review all plans for new construction and alterations to the exteriors of existing buildings and/or their settings, using the criteria in Section 29-111 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance to determine what is appropriate. It is the responsibility of the LAC to forward comments and recommendations to the HPC in a timely fashion.
2. Encourage property owners considering alterations or new construction to seek LAC and/or HPC assistance early in the planning process so that building plans will be compatible with the character of the district or the property in question.
3. Educate residents of the District regarding the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation; the role of the HPC and the HAWP process; appropriate renovation

techniques and materials; and local, state and federal financial incentives for preservation.

4. Monitor compliance with Historic Area Work Permits and report to the Commission any work which is not in compliance or which is done without HPC review.
5. Assist the HPC in documenting and evaluating district properties, where necessary.
6. Develop, with the assistance of the HPC, specific design guidelines for each district for new construction and the renovation of existing structures.
7. Review and comment upon legislation, proposed subdivisions, site plans or zoning changes which affect the district, using information supplied by the HPC, where available.
8. Develop local support for preservation efforts and the County's preservation program.
9. Send a representative to the HPC meetings at which HAWP applications from their District will be discussed.

VI. HAWP Application Review Process and the LAC

1. Property owners in historic districts having Local Advisory Committees should submit work plans to their LAC to be scheduled for review at the next regularly scheduled meeting. This review can take place before the HPC receives the application.
2. Upon receipt of an application for a HAWP within a historic district which has a LAC, HPC staff will determine whether the material has also been submitted to the LAC for review; if it has not, the HPC shall forward (within one day) a copy of the application and all supporting materials to the Chairman of the LAC for review and comment.
3. The LAC will be responsible for notifying the applicant of the date and time of the LAC meeting at which his work plans will be discussed; for submitting recommendations (in writing) to the HPC in a timely fashion following its meeting, and for indicating criteria met (or not met) and conditions recommended to be imposed, if any, in comments to the HPC.
4. The LAC will review each proposal for exterior work to determine whether it constitutes "Ordinary Maintenance" or "Substantial Alteration," as defined by the HPC, and advise the applicant accordingly.
5. In keeping with Section 29-111 (c) of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, the LAC shall be lenient in its review of plans for the alteration of structures of little historical or architectural significance located in a Historic District, and plans for new construction in its review of a Historic District, unless such plans would seriously impair the historic

or architectural significance of nearby resources or impair the character of the District as a whole. Where new construction is concerned, the LAC will be primarily concerned with building materials (including colors), scale and setback, in determining compatibility.

6. The LAC will submit its comments to the HPC not later than two weeks before the next HPC meeting (i.e., 15 days before the HPC meeting).
7. The HPC will not decide upon an application for a HAWP until it has received the comments of the LAC, unless the LAC allows the period set aside for it to comment to pass without acting.
8. The HPC may accept, reject or modify the recommendations of the LAC. Rejections must be by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Commission and the record must indicate the criteria (Section 29-111 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance) used by the HPC for rejecting or modifying LAC recommendations.
9. Property owners seeking assistance from the HPC in preparing initial work plans must also be referred to the appropriate LAC.

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