

HISTORIC RESOURCES BOARD (HRB) APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR ALTERATIONS (MULTI-FAMILY AND COMMERCIAL PROJECTS)

Applications involving commercial and multi-family historic properties in Categories 1-4 in the Downtown area, in Categories 1 and 2 outside Downtown, and in historic districts, are subject to discretionary design review by the Architectural Review Board (ARB) which includes referral of such applications to the Historic Resources Board for a recommendation to the ARB. The ARB review process includes consideration of design impacts on historic resources as part of the City's environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Consequently, the recommendation of the HRB may have a significant bearing on the ARB's recommendation. The applicant, therefore, is strongly encouraged to schedule a pre-application Advisory Meeting with the Historic Preservation Planner to discuss the HRB's standards of review (Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation) and how they may apply to the project.

The following seven application steps are intended to assist the applicant in developing a complete HRB application.

Step 1.

Schedule an Advisory Meeting with the Historic Preservation Planner to discuss the HRB's standards of review (the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation), the historic preservation policies of Goal L-7 of the Land Use & Design Element of the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan, and the requirements for a complete application. You may also receive advice regarding your proposal. The receptionist in the Planning Division (650.329.2441, and press zero) can make the appointment for you.

Step 2.

Visit the Development Center counter (Monday through Friday - 8:00 am to 4:00 pm except Wednesday -9:00 am to 4:00 pm) to request:

- A photocopy of your property from the block book
 - This will allow you to identify property line dimensions, adjacent sidewalks, public rights-of-way, and easements so that when you prepare your complete application package they can be shown accurately on your plans.
- The zoning regulations for your property
 - To prevent later delays in the process, the applicant should review the project against current zoning regulations (Title 18 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code).
- An application form.

Step 3.

Prepare preliminary plans that will enable you to visually demonstrate your proposal at the Advisory Meeting.

It is certainly an advantage if you already have a complete set of architectural plans, but it is understandable that you may want to attend the Advisory Meeting before preparing a complete application.

Step 4.

Attend the Advisory Meeting with the Historic Preservation Planner.

- This meeting may save you time and money by providing project-specific advice about City policies and guidelines.

Bring:

- Your preliminary plans
- The photocopy of your property from the block book (obtained at the Development Center)
- Photographs of your property

At this meeting the discussion will focus on the HRB process and on the consistency of your project with the Secretary's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Note:

- At the time of the HRB meeting, the HRB can recommend approval, denial, or request a revision to the project. The HRB's recommendation will be forwarded to the ARB for consideration.

Step 5.

Prepare application materials for the HRB. The following is a submittal checklist that lists the items required for a complete HRB application:

- Application form (signed by the property owner)
- Written project description addressed to the Historic Resources Board which provides a detailed description of the proposed exterior changes to the building and site
- Plans (10 copies) including:
 - Site Plan (at least 1/8" = 1'0") showing:
 - the property address, north arrow, and scale
 - property lines and easements (dimensions indicated)

- adjacent sidewalks and public right-of-way between the sidewalk and property line
 - footprint and overhang of all structures
 - tabular data which includes lot area, allowable lot coverage and gross floor area, and existing and proposed lot coverage and gross floor area
 - driveways and parking areas
 - accurate trunk locations and canopy outlines of street trees within 30-feet of the project site, private trees on the site, and trees on neighboring property that overhang the project site, including identification of all "protected trees" (Coast Live Oaks, Valley Oaks, and Coast Redwoods of a certain size). Note: A "Tree Protection and Preservation Plan" will be required for a building permit for any development activity (including basement excavation) within the "dripline" of a "protected tree," a "designated tree," or a "street tree." Refer to the City's Tree Technical Manual for definitions of these terms. Palo Alto's Tree Program including the Tree Technical Manual is available online
 - any other significant existing or proposed features (e.g. outdoor areas, fences, etc).
- Floor Plans (at least 1/4" = 1'0") showing:
 - all exterior and interior walls; and
 - proposed uses for each room (e.g. garage, kitchen, bedroom, closet).
- Elevations (at least 1/4" = 1'0") showing:
 - all elevations, existing and proposed, where the proposed change is visible (even when obscured by fencing, landscaping, etc.)
 - the required daylight planes.
 - Important note: all of the above drawings should clearly distinguish between areas/walls to be demolished, existing areas/walls to remain, and proposed new areas/walls (dimensioned) to be constructed
- **Sections**
 - Sections are not always necessary, but may be required to accurately represent daylight plane protrusions and/or 2nd and 3rd story equivalents. Please be advised that the need for a section could arise during the review process and you may be asked to supply one.

- Plans are to be stapled and folded into sets. The project address must be visible on the outside of each folded plan set. The maximum plan sheet size is 24" x 36". Reduced plans are encouraged provided they are clear and readable.
- One set of color photographs mounted on 8 ½ x 11" white boards, that show all sides of the historic structure. The elevations shown (front, rear, right side, left side) should be identified.
- Color rendering of the project (10 copies)
- Materials board

Step 6.

Make an appointment to submit the complete HRB application package to the Development Center. To make your appointment call the Planning Department receptionist at 650.329.2441 and then press zero. You can also make your appointment in person at the Development Center. The checklist items listed in Step 5 and any other information must be submitted at the same time, along with the fee for Board review. Seven of the ten required plan sets are sent to the HRB members, one to the City Council liaison, and two are placed into City records. The HRB meeting will be scheduled when both the HRB and ARB applications for the project have been deemed complete. The HRB meeting must be held prior to the ARB meeting.

Step 7.

Attend the HRB meeting. A representative such as the architect, designer and/or property owner should attend and be prepared to make a short presentation on the proposal and respond to questions from the Board. The presentation must include the materials and colors of the project. Members of the public are welcome to attend the HRB meeting, and to speak regarding the project.

The HRB meets the first and third Wednesday of each month at 8:00 am. The meetings are held in the Council Chambers (first floor of City Hall), and usually last about two hours, depending on the number of items on the agenda. A copy of the agenda and staff report is mailed to the individual listed as the applicant on the application form on the Friday preceding the meeting.