



Township of Cheltenham

Board of Historical and Architectural Review

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS INFORMATION

WHAT IS THE BHAR?

The Board of Historical and Architectural Review [BHAR] is a public advisory body created by state and local laws. The BHAR helps to protect the architectural and cultural heritage within the historic districts of Cheltenham Township by considering the effects of proposed exterior changes to buildings and structures within the districts and commenting on their appropriateness. The membership of the BHAR includes a registered architect, a real estate broker, a member of the Historical Commission, the Director of Engineering, Zoning and Inspections for the Township, and residents of the historic districts.

WHAT THE BHAR REVIEWS

The BHAR reviews all proposed exterior changes to buildings and structures within the historic district that are visible from a public street, sidewalk, or way. The BHAR reviews the proposal to determine whether it is appropriate to the individual property and within the district as a whole in regard to the architectural style, general design, arrangement, location, and materials. The types of work reviewed by the BHAR include:

- Repairs and replacements
- Alterations and renovations
- Adaptive reuse
- Additions and new construction
- Demolition and building relocation
- Fences, walls, garden structures
- Signs and awnings

Once the BHAR determines that the proposed changes are appropriate within the historic district, the BHAR will make a recommendation to the Public Works Committee of the Board of Commissioners that a Certificate of Appropriateness be issued for the proposed work.

Please note that the BHAR review is necessary but not sufficient for the granting of a building permit. Each project is also subject to Township review for compliance with zoning, building, and safety codes. The applicant must obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness [COA] as well as all necessary permits prior to proceeding with any work.

WHAT THE BHAR DOES NOT REVIEW

The BHAR does not review any interior changes, unless they affect the exterior appearance of the building, although building permits may be required for interior work. The BHAR also does not review paint colors when the proposed work is limited to re-painting. Contact the Building and Zoning Office at the Township Administration Building for assistance at [215] 887-6200, ext. 215.

TIMING FOR REVIEW

Typically, a minimum of six to eight weeks is required from the submission date of the COA application to the issuing of a building permit. If the application is incomplete, if the BHAR requests a change, or if all required Township deadlines are not met, this process could take several months. Including all required materials with a complete application expedites the review process. Contact the Building and Zoning Office at the Township Administration Building for assistance at [215] 887-6200, ext. 215.

TERMINOLOGY

Terminology utilized in the COA application:

- *Adaptive reuse*: change an existing building to accommodate a new function
- *Addition*: increase existing building or structure by building outside of existing walls and/or roof
- *Alteration*: physical change to a building or structure
- *Demolition*: intentional destruction of all or part of a building or structure
- *Feature*: portion or element of a building or structure
- *Fenestration*: arrangement of windows on a façade
- *New construction*: complete new structure or building
- *Repair*: fix a deteriorated part of a building or structure
- *Replace in-kind*: match the original feature exactly including original material, scale, size, finish, detailing, texture
- *Replace with new*: does not match original exactly

For a glossary of architectural terms, please refer to the **General Information for Applicants** brochure available from the Building and Zoning Office.

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REVIEW SCHEDULE

To have your Certificate of Appropriateness [COA] application reviewed by the BHAR, it must be submitted with the appropriate materials to the Building and Zoning Office at the Township Administration Building by 4:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month prior to the BHAR meeting at which the application is to be reviewed. BHAR meetings typically occur the first Monday of each month. Please call [215] 887-6200, ext. 215 to confirm the next meeting date.

The date of the BHAR meeting at which this application will be considered is _____. The applicant, or a project representative, is required to attend the meeting at _____ p.m. in the Township Administration Building Conference Room. At the meeting, the application will be either recommended for approval with or without conditions, tabled pending additional information, or recommended for disapproval.

The BHAR's recommendation about the COA application becomes an agenda item for consideration at the next scheduled Public Works Committee meeting to be held on Tuesday, _____ at 8:00 p.m. at the Township Administration Building Conference Room. Attendance at this meeting is optional. Applicants do not typically attend meeting if they find the BHAR recommendation acceptable.

The BHAR's recommendation about the COA application then becomes an agenda item for consideration at the next scheduled Board of Commissioners meeting scheduled for Tuesday, _____ at 7:30 p.m. at Curtis Hall on the Curtis Arboretum grounds. Attendance at this meeting is also optional. Applicants do not typically attend meeting if the BHAR recommendation is acceptable.

If approved by the Commissioners at their meeting, the Director of Engineering, Zoning and Inspections will issue the Certificate of Appropriateness if all conditions are met. The applicant can then obtain a building permit from the Department of Building Regulations, provided the application complies with all other Township codes.

A BHAR representative will review all work for compliance with the approved COA. If any changes are proposed after approval for a COA, please contact the Department of Building Regulations at [215] 887-6200, ext. 215 to determine whether any additional reviews may be required. Completed work that is not in compliance with the approved COA is subject to fines and possible removal.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

The BHAR must have all required information to review an application for a COA. If all required information is not submitted the application may be recommended for denial or tabled until the information is received.

Repairs and Replacements

- Certificate of Appropriateness Application
- Copy of deed showing ownership of property
- 4"x6" [or larger] labeled photographs showing all public views of building or structure
- Samples or catalogue cuts of materials to be used
- Any additional information required by the BHAR after an initial consultation or review

Renovations, Alterations, Additions, New Construction, and Demolition

- Certificate of Appropriateness Application
- Copy of deed showing ownership of property
- 4"x6" [or larger] labeled photographs showing:
 - a. all sides of existing buildings and structures
 - b. site surrounding existing building and structure
 - c. adjacent sites, buildings, structures including adjacent properties and across streets or ways
- 10 copies of scaled drawings indicating all proposed changes and notations for new materials:
 - a. site plan including adjacent sites, buildings
 - b. floor plans
 - c. all elevations
 - d. details of new exterior elements
- Samples or catalogue cuts of materials to be used
- Any additional information required by the BHAR after an initial consultation or review

Signs and Awnings

- Certificate of Appropriateness Application
- Copy of deed showing ownership of property
- 4"x6" [or larger] labeled photographs showing:
 - a. all public views of the existing building
 - b. the existing building and adjacent buildings
- 10 copies of scaled drawings indicating:
 - a. façade elevation with proposed sign or awning
 - b. elevation of sign or awning with letter style, logo and layout
 - c. detail of attachment to building
 - d. detail of illumination [if applicable]
 - e. detail of edge treatment [if exposed]
- Samples of materials to be used
- Samples of letter size and style to be used
- Samples of colors to be used
- Any additional information required by the BHAR after an initial consultation or review

