

1. **Does the project require HDC approval?**
 - A. Is the property in the historic district? Check the Historic District Map. (Hillsborough Historic District Design Guidelines pg. 7)
 - B. Is the project exempt from HDC review? Check the Exempt Works List. (Hillsborough Historic District Design Guidelines pg. 69)
 - (1) If the project appears on the list of exempt works the project does not require an HDC review. Contact planning staff to confirm.
 - (2) If the project does not appear on the list, proceed to Step C
 - C. Is the project a minor work? Check the Minor Works List. (Hillsborough Historic District Design Guidelines pg. 70-71)
 - (1) If the project appears on the list of minor works, contact the planning staff to apply for a minor works review and find out if any other permits are needed.
 - (2) If the project does not appear on the list, proceed to Step 2

2. **Complete a Certificate of Appropriateness Application Form.** (Available on the Town’s website or in the Planning Department)

3. **Consult the Architectural Inventory to determine if the property is designated as a contributing resource.** (Available on the Town’s website or in the Planning Department)
 - A. If the property is designated as contributing, the property owner may be eligible for State Income Tax Credits on exterior restoration work. Please contact the State Historic Preservation Office for more information.

4. **Consult the Hillsborough Historic District Design Guidelines and read the section that applies to the type of project being proposed.** (Available on the Town’s website or at the Planning Department)
 - A. The HDC will use the Standards of Evaluation, Section 3.12.3, of the Unified Development Ordinance, to decide upon the appropriateness of the application, and will consult the Hillsborough Historic District Design Guidelines during the COA review. The Commission may also refer to other guidance documents such as the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Hillsborough HDC Materials Spreadsheet.

It is recommended that the applicant check with the adjacent property owners to determine and address any concerns prior to submitting the application.

5. **Schedule a pre-application meeting with the planning staff to discuss applicable ordinances, policies and procedures.** It is suggested that the applicant have the following information available at the pre-application meeting:
 - A. The square footage of the structure that is being proposed or reconstructed
 - B. In the case of an addition to a building, the square footage of the existing structure and proposed addition
 - C. The overall dimensions of the structure and its location on the lot relative to the property lines
 - D. A conceptual site plan and both existing and proposed conditions
 - E. A list of proposed exterior materials

At the pre-application meeting, planning staff will answer any questions about precedent and process. The applicant will be informed of the deadlines for submissions. Staff will also determine whether any of the proposed work qualifies as exempt or minor work and make sure the work proposed complies with all zoning requirements. Call 919-296-9473 to schedule an appointment.

6. Check Submittal Requirements List to find out what additional materials must be submitted along with the COA application form. (Available on the Town’s website)

7. File the application at the Planning Department.

Submit the completed application and all submittal requirements to the Town of Hillsborough Planning Department, 101 East Orange St. Applications should be submitted in person, if possible, to the Planning Department during regular office hours (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.). Complete applications must be received at least 10 business days prior to a scheduled HDC meeting, which occurs on the first Wednesday of each month. However, HDC agendas often fill up before the deadline. The submittal of a complete application by the deadline will not guarantee time on the next agenda. There is a fee of \$1 per \$1,000 of construction cost or a minimum of \$10 for all COA applications.

Planning staff will determine if the application is complete and will notify the applicant if there is additional information needed. If the application is not complete, planning staff will prepare a list of revisions and/or additional information necessary to complete the application. Submission of the complete application is the applicant’s responsibility. Failure to submit all the information necessary to complete the application will prevent the application from being processed and will result in the delay of the project.

Applications must be deemed complete by staff 10 business days prior to HDC meetings.

Planning staff will send letters of notification, which include a description of the proposal, to all property owners within 100 feet of the property line, one week prior to the scheduled HDC meeting. Staff will send copies of the application materials to HDC members one week before the meeting to allow them to become familiar with the project. HDC members may conduct a site visit before the meeting, but will contact the applicant if they need to come onto the lot.

8. Preparing the Staff Report

Planning staff will prepare a staff report for the HDC. The report will include confirmation that the proposal complies with applicable zoning ordinances and policies. In the process of reviewing the application, the planning staff may require certain modifications to the project to be able to insure compliance with the applicable ordinances and policies. Planning staff will present the staff report at the public hearing.

9. Public Hearing

Applicants must attend the public hearing or send a representative. Failure to appear at the public hearing may result in the application being tabled to the next available agenda or denied.

The HDC meets the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm in the Town Barn.

At the meeting, staff, applicants, and members of the public must provide sworn testimony to support his/her position on the application to the HDC. Planning staff will introduce the application and give the HDC a staff report. Staff will also answer any pertinent questions from the HDC that relate to zoning restrictions and regulations. After the staff report, the applicant may present any additional information that is relevant to the application to give the HDC a fuller understanding of the proposed work. The HDC members will direct questions to the applicant and deliberate upon the appropriateness of the proposed work.

Any other members of the public who wish to speak about the proposed project will be sworn in and will address the HDC at this time. The applicant will be given the opportunity to address any concerns raised and answer any questions posed by the public and by the HDC.

After the question and answer period, the HDC will decide upon the appropriateness of the proposal. The members review the application for compliance with the Standards of Evaluation and Design Guidelines.

The HDC may ask the applicant to make modifications to the application. In most cases, the HDC will make a decision on an application the same night it is presented.

A motion will be made to approve, approve with conditions, or deny the application. Any attached conditions will be clearly stated. Reasons for denial will be clearly stated. The applicant may modify and re-submit a revised application with no waiting period. Approved projects may proceed with permitting through the Planning Department and Orange County Building Inspections Office.

Applicants must comply with the COA. Failure to do so may result in fines or injunction.

10. After the HDC Meeting and Appeals

The applicant will receive notice, by mail, confirming the vote of the HDC within a week of the meeting. Once the application fee is paid at the Planning Department, the applicant may pick up the COA. A copy of the COA will be filed at the Planning Department in the property files.

HDC decisions may be appealed to the Board of Adjustment. The applicant has thirty days to file an appeal at the Planning Department. The BOA is not authorized to overturn an HDC decision on any grounds other than improper procedure. The BOA will not substitute its own judgment for the vote of the HDC but will hear the appeal case and determine if there was a mistake made at the procedural level.

11. Contact Information

If you have any questions please contact:

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