

# Town of Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission Rules of Procedure

## **1. Meetings**

- 1.1 The By-Laws of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) call for regular meetings once a month. The Chair shall endeavor to provide notice to all interested parties in the community of all special and regular meetings of the HPC. The chair will forward an agenda to the Town Clerk for posting.
- 1.2 The Chair shall notify the Town Clerk of the date and time of the next meeting of the HPC.
- 1.3 The HPC shall hold its regular meeting on the third Tuesday of every month. Adequate notice to Town residents of its meetings shall be provided to residents via the Town Bulletin.

## **2. Minutes of Meetings.**

- 2.1 Minutes shall be kept at every regular and special meeting. The Chair of the HPC shall appoint a member to record the minutes of each meeting.
- 2.2 Following each meeting the minutes shall be typed and distributed to the individual members prior to the next meeting. At the next meeting of the HPC the minutes shall be read. After their approval, the member of the HPC assigned to take the minutes shall sign and date the minutes. They shall be signed by the Town Clerk and placed in a record file to be kept in the Town Office.
- 2.3 The basis for administrative decisions of the HPC shall be recorded in summary form. Unanimous unopposed administrative decisions shall be reflected in the minutes as such and are not required to be supported with written decisions or opinion. The minutes shall list all resolutions, and other official documents that are approved or adopted. The content of application reviews shall not be recorded in the minutes.
- 2.4 At the discretion of the Chair of the HPC copies of the minutes may be sent to (1) the Mayor, (2) the Chair of the Planning Commission, and (3) the Town Council Liaison to the HPC.
- 2.5 An electronic version of the approved minutes is to be provided to the Town Clerk for posting to the Town Web pages or it may be sent to the Town Web Master by the HPC member who took the minutes or by the Chair of the HPC.

## **3. Definitions**

- 3.1. Period of significance.

The period of significance for Washington Grove is 1873-1937. The beginning year is the year when the Methodists<sup>1</sup> originally purchased property<sup>2</sup> in order to establish the camp meeting. The closing year marks the dissolution of the camp meeting association and the end of the era of seasonal occupancy.

The closing year will be re-examined periodically against the state and national standards that evaluate age as a criterion for determining contribution.

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<sup>1</sup> The purchasers were the trustees of the Washington Grove Camp Meeting Association of the District of Columbia and Maryland. See Philip K. Edwards, "Washington Grove 1873-1937," (Dec. 1988)

<sup>2</sup> According to Edwards (1988) the land purchased was 267.5 acres.

### 3.2 Architecture

Most houses built during the period of significance are wood frame, 1-1/2 - 2 story structures that feature open porches usually on the front, facing the walkways, and often on the sides and rear facades. The principal style of architecture for buildings constructed from the 1870s through the 1880s is Carpenter Gothic. The character-defining element of these 1-1/2 story houses is their sharply sloped, front-gable roofs decorated with bargeboard and/or truss work. Houses built from 1885-1900, including 110, 111, and 117 Grove Avenue, exhibit Queen Anne influence in their larger, asymmetrical massing and complex roof forms. The architecture of houses dating from 1900-1920s includes Craftsman influenced houses as at 108 Grove, 109 Maple and 419 Oak, and larger, Colonial Revival influenced ones, at 103 Brown and 118 Grove.

While there is a wide variety of styles, what unifies them is a combination of their modest scale and the gradual accretion of successive small additions. This has resulted in a character described in the Historic Register Nomination form of 1979 as adaptive reuse coupled with eclectic spirit.

In the future, an effort may be made to include other architectural styles reflective of the years after the incorporation of the Town, e.g., Cape Cod, Ramblers, or even Ranch style residences.

### 3.3 Categories of structures

3.3.1 A contributing structure is one built within the period of significance, or has unique architectural or historic importance regardless of its date of construction. The structure must retain enough of its architectural integrity that the original building may still be discernable within the present structure.<sup>1</sup>

3.3.2 Non-contributing structures are those that are built after the period of significance, or are so altered that the character or form of the original structure is no longer evident.

3.3.3 A list of structures that have been classified as contributing structures in the Town of Washington Grove has been adopted by the HPC and may be obtained from the Town Office. The list shall also be available on the Town web site and shall be updated as structures are renovated, demolished, or re-evaluated by the HPC.

### 3.4 Applicant

“Applicant” shall mean the owner of the property or a representative of the owner.

## 4. Reviews

### 4.1 What is, and what is not, subject to HPC Review

The Historic Preservation Ordinance - Article XV of the TWG Ordinances specifies that the HPC perform certain reviews. It also specifies that the HPC may make exempt certain permit applications from review.

4.1.1 The Ordinances specify that the following are to be reviewed by the HPC

- a) Permits for changes to or demolition of structures that are visible from a public way.

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<sup>1</sup> The entire definition of “contributing structure” is provided in the Washington Grove Historic Preservation Commission Design Guidelines for Exterior Changes (dated March 15, 2005).

- b) Subdivision plans.
- c) Zoning map amendments.
- d) Partial or complete amendment to the Town's Master Plan.
- e) Variance or special exceptions that come before the Town's Board of Zoning Appeals.
- f) Public or private actions, improvements, or developments outside the Town's boundaries.
- g) Structures that require a Town building permit, but not a County building permit.

4.1.2 The HPC has interpreted Article XV or the Ordinances of the TWG and decided that the HPC will not review permit applications for the following:

- a) Fences
- b) Screens
- c) Tree houses
- d) Oil tanks, propane tanks, and A/C equipment.
- e) Shutters
- f) Temporary structures with a life span of less than 2 years.

#### 4.2 **Types of Reviews of Building Projects**

The HPC will conduct three types of reviews for building projects. Definitions of these reviews and the specification of materials needed for the commission to review them shall be given in an information packet provided to applicants for a building permit.<sup>1</sup>

##### 4.2.1 Preliminary consultations.

These are consultations with the HPC before the submission of a building permit application to the Town and where no written review is requested. These can take the form of informal discussion of a tentative design to guide the design toward compatibility with the existing structure and with the historic district as whole. The HPC asks that the applicants provide certain materials (see Section 4.4.) to assist it in a consultation. These consultations may help in the preparation of formal architectural drawings. Owners, residents, and contractors are encouraged to engage in preliminary consultations with the HPC. This does not constitute the review required by the Town Ordinances.

##### 4.2.2 Early review of plans.

This is a review by the HPC of plans for a project before the applicant has submitted the building permit application to the Town. The purpose of this type of review is to expedite the process and to allow the applicant the opportunity to receive advice from the HPC before he/she has gone to the expense of paying for final plans and drawings. The HPC requires that the applicant provide certain materials (see Section 4.4) to assist it in the review. The HPC will write the review based on material submitted and forward the review to the Planning Commission. If the plans submitted to the Planning Commission with the permit application deviate substantially from those submitted previously to the HPC, then the review is no longer valid and the Planning Commission

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<sup>1</sup> The HPC should act as a commission, in the open, not as individuals. HPC members could advise applicants one-on-one, however, to avoid mistakenly speaking for the HPC, members should make it clear that they are not speaking in an official capacity while advising an applicant.

may require the applicant to submit the building permit application to the HPC for a formal review. The HPC will then perform a formal review of the new application as per Section 4.2.3.

#### 4.2.3 Formal Review of Submitted Building Permit Applications.

This is a review by the HPC of an application for a building permit that has been submitted to the Town for approval. The application must be accompanied by certain materials (see Section 4.4) to assist the HPC in its review. The HPC will write a review and forward it to the Planning Commission for their consideration when they act on the submitted application.

#### 4.2.4 Review of Submitted Demolition Permit Applications.

This is a review of an application for the complete demolition of a structure in the absence of a building permit application.

### 4.3 Standards of Review

#### 4.3.1 Levels of Review

- a) For modification to non-contributing structures and construction of new structures the HPC will focus on scale, massing, and compatibility with neighboring structures and the Town as a whole.
- b) For modifications to contributing structures the HPC will additionally focus on preservation of the character defining elements of the existing site and structure.
- c) For demolition of contributing structures the HPC will consider the significance and condition of the existing structure.

#### 4.3.2 Topics to be considered in the review.

In reviewing applications, the HPC is required to give consideration to:

- (a) the historic, cultural, archaeological, or architectural significance of the site, or structure and its relationship to the historic, cultural, archeological or architectural significance of the surrounding area;
- (b) the relationship of the exterior architectural features of a site, or structure to the remainder of the site or structure and to the surrounding area;
- (c) the general compatibility of proposed design, scale, proportion, arrangement, texture, and materials to the site, or structure and to the surrounding area;
- (d) conformance with the Town of Washington Grove Design Guidelines and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Places; and
- (e) other factors which the HPC deems to be pertinent.

#### 4.3.3 Design Guidelines

The HPC will use the adopted HPC Design Guidelines in its review of all sites and structures.

#### 4.4 Submission Requirements

The materials that are needed to perform the review depend on whether the review is a Preliminary Consultation, an Early Review, or a Formal Review. The photographs of contributing structures in the Town Office may be used for reference. Materials or copies of materials submitted may be retained by the HPC.

##### 4.4.1 Preliminary Consultations

There are no fixed submission requirements for an early consultation. Scale drawings, plans, elevations, and photos will facilitate the consultation.

##### 4.4.2 Early Reviews.

To encourage discussions of plans with the HPC at as early a stage as possible the HPC conducts Early Reviews. Thus, an Early Review does not require final drawings and plans, nor does it require a completed building permit application. It does require the following:

- a) Scale drawings, plans, and elevations that show the existing structure and show the proposed changes *from all relevant directions*.
- b) Dimensions of the existing structure(s) and dimensions of the proposed new structure(s) should be indicated.
- c) The information submitted to the HPC should clearly illustrate the following:
  - i. The comparative scale of the construction in relation to the existing and surrounding structures.
  - ii. Type of exterior materials to be used, including siding, windows, and doors.
  - iii. Drawings showing the form of roof(s), their pitch, ridgeline orientation, any dormers, and eave treatments.
- d) Photographs of the existing structure. If available, photographs showing the structure in relation to the surrounding area and residences are helpful. Architectural models may also be useful to convey proposed changes.
- (e) Two copies of material are requested to allow annotations during a review.

##### 4.4.3 Formal Reviews.

To afford the HPC members an opportunity to be adequately informed of the exterior changes being proposed, the complete application must include:

- a) Completed building permit application.
- b) Survey plat clearly showing the location of existing structures and proposed construction relative to the property lines.
- c) Scale drawings, plans, and elevations that show the existing structure and show the proposed changes from all relevant directions.
- d) Dimensions of the existing structure(s) and dimensions of the proposed new structure(s) should be indicated.
- e) The information submitted to the HPC should clearly illustrate the following:
  - i. The comparative scale of the construction in relation to the existing and surrounding structures.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>“Surrounding structures” includes nearest neighboring residences and accessory buildings including those across an avenue, road or street.

- ii. Type of exterior materials to be used, including siding, windows, and doors.
  - iii. Drawings showing the form of roof(s), their pitch, ridgeline orientation, any dormers, and eave treatments.
  - f) Photographs of the existing structure. If available, photographs showing the structure in relation to the surrounding area and residences are helpful. Architectural models may also be useful to convey proposed changes.
- 4.4.3 Demolition Permit.
- a) A statement giving the reasons for complete demolition.
  - b) Photographs of the existing structure.

## 5. Review Procedures

The HPC rules and procedures for handling formal reviews, preliminary reviews, or early consultations are similar. If the applicant is present during the review then the HPC will provide information on historic preservation resources available from the Town, the County, the State, and the Federal Government.

### 5.1 Placement of the review on the HPC Agenda.

- 5.1.1 The applicant should notify the Town Clerk or the Chair of the HPC to place an early consultation or preliminary review on the agenda. The members of the HPC may also agree to place a project on the agenda at the meeting itself.
- 5.1.2 If a permit application is submitted to the Town Clerk then the HPC will automatically add the formal review to the agenda.

### 5.2 Preliminary Consultations.

- 5.2.1 (a) The applicant will present and explain its project to the HPC.  
(b) The members will discuss the plans and the application process with the applicant.
- 5.2.2 If two copies of the drawings are provided, annotations by the members may be made on the submitted material.
- 5.2.3 Significant aspects of the discussion may be placed in the minutes, but a written review will not be provided to the applicant or to the Planning Commission.
- 5.2.4 A Preliminary Consultation with the HPC can be requested any number of times.

### 5.3 Procedure for Written Reviews

The result of an Early or Formal Review is a report written by the HPC. This will be forwarded to the Planning Commission and a copy will be sent to the applicant. The name of the applicant, the nature of the project, and the location of the project will be noted in the minutes of the meeting.

- 5.3.1 Appointment of reviewer.  
For written reviews the chair of the HPC will appoint a member to act as reviewer.
- 5.3.2 Sufficiency of material for a review.  
The members of the HPC will, as a first step, examine the materials presented to the HPC. A check list based on Section 4.4.2 and 4.4.3 will be used for written reviews. If the materials are sufficient to perform the review the HPC will proceed. If not, an attempt may be made to contact the applicant, if this is unsuccessful, a letter will be written to the Planning Commission and the applicant stating why the

written review is not possible and asking the applicant to voluntarily resubmit with the proper materials.

5.3.3 Annotation of Standard Data:

The Chair summarizes the HPC review procedure for the applicant(s) and summarizes the scope of the project including whether:

- a) the subject of the project is a contributing structure,
- b) there are contributing structures nearby, and
- c) the project can be viewed from a public way.

5.3.4 Presentation by Applicant

The applicant presents the plans. Members may ask questions for clarification. Annotations may be made on the submitted material by HPC members.

5.3.5 Discussion by Commissioners

The commissioners will discuss the scale, compatibility, and massing of the project as outlined in Section 4.3. If it is a contributing structure, then issues of historic preservation will be commented on as well. The commission will discuss various elements of the design with the applicant, if present, in an effort to achieve compatibility. Each commissioner will have an opportunity to comment and express opinions regarding the plans. No commission vote is taken. All comments will be reflected in the written review.

The expectation is that any representative of the owner will pass verbal advice, or opinions provided by the HPC at the meeting to the owner.

5.3.6 Summary by Reviewer

The reviewer may summarize his/her notes and ask for clarifications.

5.3.7. Initial the Log Sheet.

The Chair will initial the Town Clerk's log sheet in the case of a formal review and close the proceedings.

5.4 **Distribution and Disposition of the Reviews.**

5.4.1 Writing the Review

The appointed reviewer takes notes, writes the review, and forwards it to the Town Clerk. It shall be left to the reviewer's discretion how the individual comments of the commissioners are included in the written review. The review must be completed on HPC stationery and submitted to the Town Clerk *two business days* before the next regular meeting of the Planning Commission.

5.4.2 Role of the Town Clerk

The Town Clerk will

- a) place a copy of the review with the application so that it is ready for review by the Planning Commission.
- b) send a copy of the review to the owner and representative by mail.
- c) place a copy of the review in the HPC loose leaf binder.
- d) send an electronic copy to the Town Web Master if that has not been done by the reviewer or the Chair of the HPC.

5.4.3 Early Reviews.

- i. When the applicant later files an application for a building permit with the Town, the material submitted with that application will be compared with the written Early Review, if it shows sufficient attention to the recommendations

in the Early Review, it will be forwarded directly to the Planning Commission for action, without needing a Formal Review by the HPC.

- ii. If there is sufficient question of the development of the final design by the initial reviewer of the material, it will be added to the agenda of the next HPC meeting for Formal Review.
- iii. The HPC reviewer will be the contact with the Chair of the Planning Commission to decide whether or not the plans later submitted to the Town with the permit application constitute a new project and thus require a new review by the HPC before Planning Commission action.

## **6. Demolition.**

- 6.1 Determine whether the structure is on the list of contributing structures. See Sec. 3.3.1 above.
- 6.2 Review submitted photographs of existing structure as required under Sec. 11.3 to verify its continued eligibility as a historically significant structure. If the structure is deemed to be no longer eligible, it will be removed from the list of contributing structures.
- 6.3 If it remains eligible, then the HPC will request access to the structure to record historic and significant features.
- 6.4 The HPC will write a report documenting the significant architectural features of the structure.
- 6.5 The HPC will forward its written report to the Planning Commission (PC) within 30 days from the receipt of the application from the PC. A copy of the report will be sent by the HPC to the owner and any designated representative of the owner.

## **7. Subdivision Application Reviews.**

- 7.1 The HPC, based on Art. XV, Sec. 5(b), will conduct one or more Preliminary Consultations with applicants before the applicant submits plans for a subdivision to the Planning Commission.
- 7.2 The HPC will conduct a Formal Review of a subdivision plan submitted to the Planning Commission. The application must contain a clear plat drawn to scale showing the property to be subdivided and the proposed subdivision.
- 7.3 Subdivisions will be reviewed for compatibility with the scale and form of the adjacent neighborhoods and the degree to which it reinforces the goals of the Master Plan and character of the Town of Washington Grove.
- 7.4 The HPC will forward its written review to the Planning Commission (PC) within 60 days from the receipt of the application from the PC. A copy of the review will be sent by the HPC to the owner and any designated representative of the owner.

## **8. Other Reviews**

The HPC, based on Art. XV Section 5(c) (d) (e) will review zoning map amendments and modifications of, or changes to, the Town's Master Plan that come before the Planning Commission, as well as variances or special exceptions that come before the Town's Board of Zoning Appeals.



- 8.1 Zoning map amendments and proposed modifications to the Town's Master Plan shall be forwarded to the HPC by the Planning Commission. In turn, the HPC will review the zoning map amendment and will forward its written recommendations to the Planning Commission and Town Council within 60 days from the HPC's receipt of the application from the Planning Commission.
- 8.2 Applications or filings for special exceptions that come before the Town's Board of Zoning Appeals shall be forwarded to the HPC by the Board of Zoning Appeals. In turn, the HPC will conduct a Formal Review of the application and forward its recommendations to the Board of Zoning Appeals within 30 days from the HPC's receipt of the application from the Board of Zoning Appeals.

## **9. Other Duties of the HPC**

- 9.1 Public or private actions, improvements, or developments outside the Town's boundaries. The HPC shall review private actions, improvements, or developments outside the Town's boundaries that may affect the historic district. If the HPC determines that outside actions may have an effect, positive or negative, on the Town's historic district, the HPC will make every attempt to express its ideas to such private individuals, county officials, or state officials.

## **10. Publication of Application Process and Forms**

- 10.1 The rules of procedure and all application forms shall be available from the Town Clerk and posted on the Town Web site.
- 10.2 An explanation of the types of reviews, the specification of materials needed for the reviews, and the HPC procedures for performing these reviews shall be given in an information packet provided to applicants for a building permit. The packet shall be available from the Town Clerk or downloadable from the Town Website.
- 10.3 The HPC shall, in cooperation with the Planning Commission, outline the review process in a flow chart that shall be given in the information packet.
- 10.4 Answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ's) regarding the application process with respect to the HPC shall be posted on the Town Website.

## **11. Records**

Based on Art. XV Section 5(i) the HPC shall maintain the Town archives. The HPC shall provide the Town Archivist or other individual(s) appointed by the Town Council with guidelines for the preservation of Town records. In that connection

- 11.1 All HPC reviews will be kept in the Town archives with their respective application forms and materials for building and demolition permits, subdivision applications, zoning map amendments, master plan revisions, and applications for variances or special exceptions.
- 11.2 Photograph Archive  
Every ten years the HPC shall gather photos of all contributing structures in the Town of Washington Grove. It shall store the photos in Albums. The most recent shall be available for use when conducting reviews.

11.3 Record photos

The HPC shall ask applicants to submit photos of their project before construction and after construction. In the event a structure is to be demolished, the HPC will require applicants to submit photographs of the exterior of the structure from all sides before demolition is begun.

Adopted this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2010.

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Bob Booher, Chair HPC