

Application #

**TOWN OF ACTON
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
472 Main Street, Acton, MA 01720**

APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE

This information will be publicly posted on the Town of Acton website docushare.

Pursuant to Ch. 40C of the General Laws of Massachusetts, application is hereby made for issuance of the following Certificate for work within a Local Historic District (please check one):

Cert. of Appropriateness (Building Alteration/Sign/Fence/Change of Ownership) Fee: \$10 ____

Cert. of Appropriateness (Building Addition other than deck/New Bldg/Demolition) Fee: \$50 ____

Cert. of Hardship (for either category of Appropriateness) Fee: \$10 or \$50 (as appropriate) ____

Cert. of Non-Applicability No Fee ____

Fees waived for non-profit or municipal applicants.

Applicant: _____

Telephone: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Property owner and address:
(if different from applicant)

Contact information: _____

Location of Work: _____

District: Center ____ West ____ South ____

No. Street

Description of Work: (See website Instructions regarding information that is here required)

The undersigned hereby certifies that the information on this application and any plans submitted herewith are correct, and constitute a complete description of the work proposed. By my signature below, I acknowledge that this application and all its data will be publicly posted on the Town of Acton website docushare.

Signature of applicant _____ Date: _____

Application received by _____ for HDC Date: _____

COA approved/CNA issued by _____ for HDC Date: _____

INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION for filing an application for a CERTIFICATE for work in a Local Historic District

I. CONTACT THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Anyone contemplating exterior work within a Historic District may contact the Commission to discuss a project before making an application. We can tell you what types of work require a Certificate, whether you need to submit an application, and give you an idea of the types of things that will be approved. A list of Commission members is available on the website, and any member will be glad to answer your questions, or to set up an appointment on the Commission's meeting agenda to discuss your plans. The Commission ordinarily meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. in Town Hall, 472 Main Street. Meetings are posted on the HDC website at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting along with the agenda for the meeting.

II. HOW TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FORM Application forms can be downloaded from the HDC website (see above), obtained from the Town Clerk's office, or by calling the Commission.

1. Describe the work as fully as possible, attaching separate sheets as necessary.
2. If you are applying to update a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) currently in force to reflect a change in ownership of the property, attach a copy of that COA to your application and state in your application: (a) your name(s), (b) the date your ownership of the property became effective, and -- under "Description of Proposed work" -- (c) your intent to complete the project under the terms approved in the COA, signing the application where indicated. If you anticipate that you will need more time to complete the project than the COA permits, please include that request, stating the reason(s) for such an extension. Depending on the complexity of the approved project, the Commission may ask to meet with you concerning the project before issuing a new COA reflecting the change in ownership.

A COA issued to reflect a change in ownership of the property simply permits the new owner to complete the project under the terms of that COA, including its expiration date. Before engaging in any work within the Commission's jurisdiction which differs in any respect from that approved in the current COA, you must apply for a new COA and undergo full review of the project by the Commission.

3. Each application, other than one that simply updates a COA to reflect a change in ownership, must be accompanied by the following information:

A. Diagram(s) or sketch(es) of the proposed work:

-- for some minor alterations such as doors, windows, and lighting fixtures, one sketch showing the proposed location on the building or property, along with a manufacturer's information page, is usually sufficient;

-- for all new construction, including an addition to an existing building, please submit views drawn to scale (1/4"=1') of all visible exterior elevations, applicable floor plans, along with explanatory notes, sections, and details of architectural trim, door and window types, etc. Include a plot plan, showing the existing building(s) and the location of the new construction;

-- for a sign, please submit a scale drawing of the proposed design, a representation of the lettering style, information on materials to be used, and a sketch of the sign's position on the building. For a free-standing sign, a plot plan, showing proposed location of the sign, with all distances from the building and lot lines, must be provided;

B. Photographs of the existing conditions. Photos taken with your phones are fine; if you do not have access to a camera, let us know and we will take a photograph;

C. Any additional drawings, diagrams, photos, product samples, and specifications requested by the Commission.

4. Date, sign, and fill in all requested information on the application form. The date of the filing of an application shall be the date on which a copy of such application is received by the office of the Town Clerk.

5. Mail or deliver two copies of the full application to the Town Clerk at Town Hall, 472 Main St., Acton. With the exception of municipal or non-profit applicants, an application fee, payable to the Town of Acton, is required for a Certificate of Appropriateness or a Certificate of Hardship, as follows: Alterations (new windows, doors, roofing, decks, fencing, signs, etc.) or Change of Ownership: \$10; Additions that increase the building's square footage (including attached garages), New buildings, Demolitions: \$50. No fee is required for a Certificate of Non-applicability. In addition to the application fee, if a Public Hearing is held on an application, the applicant will be billed for the Legal Notice.

III. COMMISSION REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

The Commission may appoint one or more of its members to initially screen applications to informally determine whether any application includes and/or is submitted with sufficient information upon which the Commission may conduct its review. Within 14 days following the first filing of an application, the Commission or its appointee/s may determine that insufficient

information has been provided, in which case the application may be once returned to the applicant, with written advice as to what was considered to be lacking. The applicant will then be required to re-file the application before any further Commission action is required. The Commission will consider applications in the order of their receipt. The Commission may hold a public hearing on the application, or, if the proposed work is minor in nature, may undertake to review it without a public hearing. In either case, your presence at the meeting at which your application is discussed will help its processing, as the Commission may need more information before it can make a decision, or might request minor changes that will make your application subject to quick approval.

IV. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT EXTERIOR WORK IN A LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

1. Work on a project requiring Commission approval shall not be started until the required Certificate, as well as any other applicable permit or license, has been issued.
2. Changes may be made from the work described in the approved Certificate only with the Commission's written approval, usually in the form of an amended Certificate.
3. All Certificates are valid for work commenced within one year from the date of issuance. An extension or renewal of a Certificate will be granted at the discretion of the Commission. If a property changes ownership during the time a Certificate is in force, a new owner who wishes to continue the authorized work must apply to have a new Certificate issued in his or her name.
4. Types of Certificates: The Commission has a maximum of 14 days to determine if work proposed in an application is within its jurisdiction. If the work is not under the Commission's jurisdiction, a Certificate of Non-applicability will be issued. A Certificate of Non-applicability is not always needed, but if the applicant is seeking other permits, such as a roofing or building permit, it is issued to show the permitting department that the Historic District Commission has checked the plans. If the work proposed in an application falls under the Commission's review, it will need a Certificate of Appropriateness. This is the Certificate that shows that the proposed work has been found to be compatible with the character of the property and the Historic District. In rare cases, the Commission may issue a Certificate of Hardship. In this case, the applicant will be asked to indicate on a separate sheet the reasons why (a) owing to conditions affecting the building or structure, but not affecting the district as a whole, failure to approve an application will involve a substantial hardship, financial or otherwise, to the applicant, and (b) no substantial detriment to the public welfare, and no substantial derogation from the intent and purpose of the Acton Historic District Bylaw would result from approval of the application.
5. The Commission reserves the right to defer its final decision on a proposal up to 60 days from the recorded date of an application.
6. A person aggrieved by a determination of the Commission may, within twenty days of the

issuance of a Certificate or disapproval, file a written request with the Commission for a review by a person or persons of competence and experience in such matters, acting as arbitrator and designated by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council.