

Obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness

Process Description:

Historic district designation is designed to protect and enhance the existing character of the community. The Goldsboro Historic District Commission was created and charged with the responsibility of protecting, maintaining and enhancing the character of the district by a review process based on established design guidelines. Any exterior change within the Goldsboro Historic District must receive a **Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)** prior to beginning the work, regardless of other required city permits. A property owner (or representative) who develops a project concept requiring a **Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)** is encouraged to consult with staff and review the design guidelines to determine whether his or her project is classified as "minor work" or "major work". A Minor work is reviewed and approved by staff. A Major work is reviewed by the **Goldsboro Historic District Commission** in a quasi-judicial public meeting held once per month.

The owner obtains a **COA application form**, completes it, attaches supplemental materials as applicable, and submits it and the application fee by mail or in person to the **Department of City Planning** office. Upon receipt of the application, staff verifies that it is complete and determines if the project involves minor work or major work through criteria set forth by the **Design Guidelines**. Applicants are informed when submittal package is incomplete and staff is unable to process the project.

To determine if a property is located within a Historic District, please contact the Department of City Planning at 919-580-4327.

What is considered to be an exterior change which would result in the requirement of a COA?

For administrative purposes, exterior work items are divided into three categories: normal maintenance, minor work and major work.

Normal Maintenance does not require a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) since no change is made to the appearance of a building.

Normal maintenance could be any of the following: painting; replacement of window glass; caulking and weather-stripping; installation of temporary mechanical equipment (window air conditioners, television antennas, etc.); landscaping installation; minor pruning of trees and shrubbery; repairs to walks, patios, fences and driveways as long as replacement material matches the original; replacement of small amounts of missing or deteriorated siding trim, roof shingles, porch flooring, steps, etc., as long as replacement materials match the original (for siding, roofing and porch flooring, approximately 20 square feet or less shall be considered normal maintenance); temporary signs (real estate, political, etc.); and street and sidewalk repair and maintenance.

Minor Work items require a Certificate of Appropriateness and can be approved by the Planning Department Staff.

Staff members approve the application upon determining that the proposed work meets the **Design Guidelines for the Goldsboro Historic District** or after working with the applicant to modify the project to meet these guidelines. After approval, staff will mail the applicant an approval letter and the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) which is good for six (6) months from issuance date. If work is not commenced within six months the COA will expire and the applicant must re-apply prior to performing any exterior work. The applicant must have the COA on site (accessible for inspectors) while performing the approved work. Any minor work application that staff does not approve is automatically referred to the Goldsboro Historic District Commission for review.

Minor work could be any of the following: side and rear yard fences and walls not facing a public street; tree removals when tree is living and less than 18 inches in diameter; new roof coverings if the original material is being used; installation of mechanical equipment; foundation repairs including vents and access doors; re-pointing and other masonry repairs; installation of exterior lighting fixtures; historical identification signs; removal of asbestos or other artificial siding; replacement of exterior stairs, landings and steps; and replacement of missing or deteriorated siding, porch floors, roofing, fencing, walls, etc., or architectural details when there is no change in design or materials from the original, or when materials to be used are included within the Design Guidelines for the Goldsboro Historic District.

Major Work must be approved by the Goldsboro Historic District Commission. In general, these are items which involve a change in the appearance of a building or landscape, and are more substantial in nature than minor work items.

Major work applications are placed on the next **Goldsboro Historic District Commission agenda**, based upon which **COA deadline date** they meet. The applicant will receive a copy of the meeting agenda in the mail one week prior to the meeting date. The applicant and any other parties who wish to speak do so when the case is called during the public testimony portion of the quasi-judicial public hearing. The **Historic District Commission** then makes a decision to approve, approve with conditions, defer (usually to provide the applicant an opportunity to gather additional information supporting his/her application), or deny the application. After the meeting, the applicant will receive the following: a letter stating the decision made and the approved COA (which is good for six (6) months from issuance date), if the commission approved the application without conditions. If the approval came with conditions to be completed prior to the issuance of permits, the applicant must act to meet these conditions before the COA approval is released. If work is not completed within six months the COA will expire and the applicant must re-apply prior to performing any exterior work.

Major work could be any of the following: front yard fences and walls; new construction or additions to buildings; demolition of any part of a structure; moving of structures; advertising signs; new accessory buildings; parking lots; replacement of missing or deteriorated siding, trims, porch floors, roofing, fencing, walls, etc., or architectural

details when there will be a change in design or materials from the original, and when the materials to be used are not included within the Design Guidelines for the Goldsboro Historic District; construction of new streets, sidewalks or utilities; and tree removal when tree is living and greater than 18 inches in diameter.

How do I start the process?

Either download a **COA application** and the **Design Guidelines for Goldsboro Historic District** from www.ci.goldsboro.nc.us or call and ask that hard copies be mailed or visit the Department of City Planning to obtain copies in person. The applicant should then read through the **Design Guidelines**, particularly those sections most relevant to the proposed project, to evaluate whether or not they believe the proposed work complies with the **Design Guidelines**. If the project does not seem compatible with the **Design Guidelines**, the applicant should either consider altering the project to make it compatible, or should contact staff to ask for assistance in modifying the work to meet the **Design Guidelines**. The applicant should then complete the **COA application**, attaching additional documentation as needed, and submit it by mail to: City Planning PO Drawer A Goldsboro, NC 27533 or in person.

The applicant is strongly encouraged to contact the City Planning Department to schedule a pre-submittal meeting to discuss the proposed work and ensure a COA is necessary.

What do I need to submit to the City?

COA SUBMITTAL PACKAGE	
Required for Submittal	Certificate of Appropriateness Application Written description of the project and proposed work. Fee payment in the form of a check made payable to the City of Goldsboro Photographs of existing conditions
Required for Most Projects	Plot plan Description of materials/material samples Dimensioned plan, elevation, and detail drawings (existing and proposed) Detailed manufacturers information for new items to be used (doors, windows, etc.) and material samples Photographs of completed work similar to the proposed project within the district

What additional documents may be needed?

No additional documents are required from the City for a COA approval. However, the extra items listed in the submittal table above may need to be generated by the applicant in order to provide information regarding a project sufficient for an approval to be granted.

Where do I submit my application?

Office: City of Goldsboro
Department: City Planning
Location: Front Desk
Address: 200 North Center Street, Goldsboro, NC 27530
Adjacent to: Historic City Hall
Phone #: (919) 580-4327
Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

What are the keys to success?

- Consult with staff prior to or during your planning phase. Read the **Design Guidelines for Goldsboro Historic District** and modify proposed work to comply with them PRIOR to applying for a project
- Follow application instructions and complete the form accurately and legibly
- Sign the application
- Use black ink (for text as well as drawings) and reduce documents in a legible manner to 8 1/2" x 11" paper
- Make intentions clear (existing vs. what is proposed)
- Clearly describe and show what changes are planned, including dimensions, materials, and any additional information you think would be helpful to understand exactly what is to occur at a property
- Where appropriate, provide drawings of the proposed work and make sure to dimension the drawings or provide an accurate graphic scale
- Obtain a COA for the entire scope of the project whenever possible, avoiding needlessly applying for small fragments of a large project in multiple applications. An applicant should contact staff prior to application submittal, if they suspect the project should be broken into separate minor work and major work applications

What fees are involved and when do I pay them?

- Application fees are due at time of submittal
- **Fee payment** in the form of a check made payable to: City of Goldsboro
- Send submittal package to: **City of Goldsboro Planning**, Historic District Staff, PO Drawer A Goldsboro, NC 27533 or in person to: 200 North Center Street, Goldsboro NC
- COA application fee is \$50.00

How long will this process take?

Applications for minor work generally take three (3) business days (excluding mailing time), with rare exceptions such as inconsistency with the guidelines that requires elevating an application to major work for COA committee approval.

Applications for major work usually take between 12 and 14 business days. Major work applications are due 2 weeks prior to the Historic District Commission Meeting date. The Historic District Commission meets the first Tuesday of each month at 5:30pm in Historic City Hall. The COA is usually issued the day after the Historic District Commission meeting.

Please keep in mind the COA process only approves for work to be done in the Goldsboro Historic District. Additional permits may be necessary from the Goldsboro Inspections Department to ensure the work meets the standards of the North Carolina Building Code. The Inspections Department can be reached by calling 919-580-4385.

Does the COA have an expiration date?

A Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is valid for six (6) months from the date of issuance. If at the time of the expiration date the approved work has not been commenced the applicant must re-apply prior to performing any exterior work.

What do I do if I want to make changes to an existing COA?

A Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is only good for the work it describes. If additional work is needed and requires a COA then the applicant will have to apply for a separate COA for additional work that is not listed on an existing COA.