



La Porte Historic Preservation Commission

801 Michigan Avenue

La Porte, Indiana 46350

219-362-8260

CITY OF LA PORTE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS PROCEDURES

1. It is advisable for the staff or design review committee to meet with an applicant ahead of time to answer his/her questions and review the proposed work. It must be made clear to the applicant, however, that s/he will still need to go through a formal review before the Historic Preservation Commission.
2. Once an application for a certificate of appropriateness (COA) is received, it is reviewed by the staff or the Commission for completeness and clarity. If the application is not complete or clear, it will be returned to the applicant for additional information or revision with an explanation of what is needed.
3. Once the application is complete, it can be forwarded to the Office of Community Development & Planning, 801 Michigan Avenue, La Porte, IN 46350 at least two weeks before the regularly scheduled Commission meeting.
4. The staff will indicate on the application the date of submission.
5. The staff or Commission will inspect the property and take photographs, if necessary, of the area of the structure or site which will be affected by the proposed work.
6. The staff or Commission will review the project according to the standards for the district.
7. If the project follows the standards, staff will make a recommendation to the Commission to approve the project at the next Commission meeting.
8. If the project does not follow the standards or is questionable, the staff will put it on the agenda for the next meeting and prepare a report for the Commission with his/her recommendations.
9. The report will be sent to the Commission members with the monthly agenda and minutes. The Commission members should familiarize themselves with the proposed project before the next meeting. A notice of the date of the public meeting will be sent to the applicant.
10. At the next meeting, the Commission members will review the project according to the standards. Any members with a conflict of interest should excuse him/her from the discussion and the vote.

11. If the applicant or the applicant's representative is in attendance, the Commission may clarify points or question him/her. The applicant will have an opportunity to explain and defend the project. The Commission may wish to request expert testimony if a technical aspect of the application is unclear. Remonstrators will also have an opportunity to speak.

The Commission should render all decisions on COAs as if they might be subject to legal challenge. They should consider three questions:

- a. Does everyone involved understand the application?
- b. Does the proposed project meet the standards? Consider first, the larger elements such as scale, massing, height, and then details.
- c. Once a decision is reached, does everyone understand it?

12. The Commission will then make its decision based on the standards.

13. If the Commission votes in favor of the project, the chairperson or his/her designee will sign the COA and a copy of it will be forwarded to the applicant. The reasons for the decision should be noted in the motion and recorded in the minutes.

14. If the Commission votes to deny the COA, the members must explain the reasons to the applicant and make suggestions as to how s/he might change the project so that it complies with the standards. A letter with the reasons for denial must be forwarded to the applicant.

15. The Commission must take action on a COA within 30 days after it is filed. The Commission may grant an extension of the 30 day limit if the applicant agrees to it.