

## **HISTORIC RESOURCES BOARD (HRB) APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS**

The information below outlines the review process for applications to alter the exterior of properties that are subject to the Historic Preservation Ordinance, and applications to designate properties to the Historic Inventory.

### **Application for Alterations**

The HRB reviews only those alterations that require a building permit, unless the applicant requests other types of review.

Prior to submitting an application, the applicant is encouraged to meet with the Historic Preservation Planner for guidance on the project. The Historic Preservation Planner can also discuss the specific requirements for a complete HRB application with the applicant.

#### **1. Submit Application to the City of Palo Alto Development Center:**

You must schedule an appointment to submit an HRB application. To schedule an appointment call the Planning Department at 650.329.2441 and then press zero to speak with the receptionist who will make an appointment for you. You can also schedule the appointment in person at the Development Center, located at 285 Hamilton Ave.

The requirements for a complete application are listed in the Application Procedure guidelines. All the required items on the form must be submitted at the same time, along with the fee for Board review. Most alteration applications are considered minor projects for the purpose of fee assessment.

#### **2. Staff Review:**

Planning Division staff will review the application for completeness and for consistency with the City's zoning regulations, (Title 18 of the Municipal Code).

#### **3. Notification:**

Staff will notify the applicant within 30 days from the date it was submitted whether the application is complete or incomplete. If staff finds the application complete, the project will be placed on the next available HRB agenda. If the application is incomplete, staff will inform the applicant what is needed. The project will be scheduled for the HRB meeting only when the application has been deemed complete and the plans have been checked for zoning compliance.

#### **4. Staff Recommendation:**

The Historic Preservation Planner will review the project for consistency with the HRB's standards of review (the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation) and will make a recommendation to the HRB.

5. **Historic Resources Board Meeting:**

The Historic Preservation Planner will present the staff recommendation and a summary of the project to the HRB. The applicant will then have the opportunity to present the project to the Board. The Board will ask any questions they have of the applicant and/or staff, and allow the public to comment on the project. After public comment has been received, the public hearing will be closed and the Board will discuss the project. The Board will then make a motion on the project. The motion will be to recommend approval of the project, recommend approval of the project with conditions, continue the project to another HRB meeting, or recommend against the project.

6. **HRB Recommendation:**

The Board will make a recommendation to the Architectural Review Board, or the Director of Planning and Community Environment, or the City Council, depending on the type of project and its procedural requirements. For applications involving single-family and duplex residences on the Historic Inventory, compliance by the property owner with the HRB recommendations is voluntary, not mandatory.

### **Application for Designation**

1. **Submit the Application Package to the Development Center:**

You must schedule an appointment to submit an HRB application. To schedule an appointment call the Planning Department at 650.329.2441 and then press zero to speak with the receptionist who will make an appointment for you. You can also schedule the appointment in person at the Development Center, located at 285 Hamilton Ave.

The application package should include the application form, a narrative description of the architectural or historic significance of the building and photos, plans, sketches, or other relevant documents. Photos and other images must be mounted on 8 1/2" x 11" white boards. All sides of the historic structure should be shown and identified. The application materials must all be submitted at the same time, along with the fee for Board review. An application for designation is a minor project for the purpose of fee assessment.

Applicants are encouraged to carry out as much research on the property as they can, and the resources of the Palo Alto Historical Association are an excellent starting point. The Association's archive, housed at the Palo Alto Main Library at 1213 Newell Road, contains extensive information on early Palo Alto including articles, permit notices, and photographs relating to the original construction of today's historic buildings. The Association's holdings include newspaper clipping files organized under subject headings, historic photograph files, obituary files which are indexed, and a street address card file which cites early building permit notices that appeared in the Palo Alto Times (available on microfilm). The Historical Association can be contacted through the Main Library reference desk, 650.329.2664. The archives are open to the public on Tuesdays, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., and Thursdays from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Research materials

that are available during all hours that the Main Library reference desk is open include the official Historic Inventory binder, City Directories that list the owners and tenants of properties from 1895 - 1979, and Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps on microfilm that show how building footprints changed (or did not change) during the first half of the twentieth century. Building alterations may be further researched at the Development Center using the Building Plan Microfiche Files and the Building Optical Disk System (BODS). Staff can show the applicant how to use these resources.

**2. Staff Review and Recommendation:**

The Historic Preservation Planner will review the application for consistency with the designation procedures and the criteria for designation set forth in the Historic Preservation Ordinance, and will recommend to the HRB whether the building qualifies for listing on the Inventory in the requested Category.

**3. Historic Resources Board Review and Recommendation:**

After considering the staff recommendation and any public testimony, the HRB will evaluate the applicant's request for listing on the Historic Inventory. The Board's recommendation is forwarded to the City Council for a decision.

Note: The application procedure for reclassifying properties on the Historic Inventory to a higher Category is the same as the procedure for designation.