



## **HISTORIC REVIEW COMMISSION OF PITTSBURGH**

### **Rules and Procedures**

These rules shall be in conformance with the Pittsburgh Code of Ordinances, Title 11: Historic Preservation, Chapter 1, as amended by City Council on July 22, 1997:

#### A. Ethical Procedures

No member of the Historic Review Commission shall use the office or any confidential information received through holding a position as member of the Commission to obtain financial gain.

#### B. Officers

1. The officers of the Historic Review Commission shall consist of a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, and a Secretary. The Mayor of the City of Pittsburgh shall appoint the Chairperson. The Commission shall elect the Vice-Chairperson and Secretary of the Commission.
2. Should the Chairperson resign, the Vice-Chairperson shall act as Chairperson until a new chairperson is appointed by the Mayor. The Commission shall also elect a new Vice Chairperson to serve until the selection of a new chairperson, when the former Vice Chairperson shall resume the office.
3. The Vice-Chairperson and Secretary shall be elected annually at the Commission's regular meeting in December of each year. The newly elected Vice Chairperson and Secretary shall assume their office on the day following their election.

#### C. Meetings

1. *Regular Meetings:* Regular meetings shall be held once a month at a date, time and place determined and publicized by the Commission. Any change in time and place shall be approved by a majority of the Commission members. All regular scheduled meetings shall be open to the public.
  2. *Public Notice:* Public notice of the schedule of regular meetings for each year shall be published at least once in a newspaper of general circulation, at least three days prior to the first meeting of the year. This notice shall indicate the dates, times and places of each of the regularly scheduled meetings.
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3. *Special Meetings:* the Chairperson or the Vice-Chairperson may call Special meetings. The Staff of the Commission, upon notification by the Chairperson or the Vice-Chairperson, shall notify the other members of the Commission of the meeting by telephone or by mail. Such notice shall specify the time, place, and agenda of the special meeting. Public notice shall be given twenty-four hours in advance of a special meeting.
  4. *Quorum:* An official meeting of the Historic Review Commission can be called to order with the establishment of a quorum of four members. All members of the commission shall be entitled to vote, and the decision of the Commission shall be determined by a majority vote of the members present at the meeting.
  5. *Attendance:* The Mayor shall be advised in writing by the Commission Chairperson should any member miss four consecutive regularly-scheduled meetings or more than one-third of the regularly-scheduled meetings in any one calendar year.
  6. *Committees:* The Chairperson may appoint Committees as needed to study special aspects of the Commission's work.
  7. *Agenda:* The agenda for each regularly scheduled Commission meeting shall be set at a deadline of 4:00 PM on the day two weeks before the meeting. Items may be removed from the agenda after that date, but none may be added. Applicants for review of exterior work shall submit a completed application form (supplied by the Commission's staff) by the deadline. Individuals who wish to address the Commission on matters unrelated to specific work applications shall submit a written request to do so indicating the nature of their address, by the deadline.
  8. *Conduct of the Meetings:* The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings, or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chairperson, or in their absence, the Secretary. In the absence of all of the officers, any member of the Commission designated or elected by those present shall preside.
  9. *Procedure:* In the absence of any provision in these rules to the contrary, the rules of procedure provided by Robert's Rules of Order shall prevail. The chairperson shall rule on all procedural questions, subject to reversal by two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members present. The Commission will not permit discussion or address to the body by the public at its meetings without recognition by the presiding officer.

#### D. Application Process

Before the commencement of any exterior work for the erection of a new construction or the alteration, demolition, or reconstruction of any building located in a Historic District or designated as a Historic Structure or Historic Site, or any alteration to a Historic Object, whether or not a permit is required from the Bureau of Building Inspection, the applicant shall apply to the Historic Review Commission and upon review and approval receive a Certificate of Appropriateness.

*The application for a Certificate of Appropriateness and the review process are as follows:*

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residents, or in commercial areas, property owners of each district. Local review committees shall advise the Commission on work applications and on guidelines for the issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness for the district.

9. *Presentation Agenda:*

- A. The staff shall summarize the application and shall describe its recommendations and those of the Local Review Committee.
  - B. The applicant, upon recognition by the presiding officer, shall be allowed to explain the application and shall answer the questions of the Commission members.
  - C. The presiding officer shall then allow proponents of the proposal to speak, upon recognition. A period of three (3) minutes shall be allowed for all proponents.
  - D. The presiding officer shall then allow opponents of the proposal or other interested parties to speak and question the petitioner, upon recognition. A period of three (3) minutes shall be allowed for all such speakers.
  - E. Proponents will then be allowed a period of three (3) minutes for all speakers who wish to offer rebuttal. Opponents shall not be allowed to rebut.
  - F. Individuals who have requested to address the commission on matters unrelated to specific work applications, and who are included on the agenda of the meeting, shall have a maximum of three (3) minutes in which to speak.
  - G. The presiding officer may extend or shorten these time limitations, with the approval of the commission members present, in exceptional and unusual cases.
10. At the meeting, the commission shall consider the testimony presented to it, as well as the criteria for evaluation of work applications.
11. Following the meeting, the commission shall vote in public to approve (with or without conditions), deny, or postpone consideration of each application. If the commission fails to take action within sixty (60) days of the monthly meeting at which it first reviewed the application, then the application shall be deemed to be approved.
12. All applicants and the head of the Bureau of Building Inspection shall be notified in writing of the decisions of the Historic Review Commission. If the Commission gives its final approval to an application, then the staff shall prepare a Certificate of Appropriateness for that proposal. The Staff and the Secretary of the Commission must sign all Certificates of Appropriateness for them to be valid (unless the certificate is issued under the guidelines established for Administrative Approvals, when only the signature of the staff is required). If the Commission denies an application, its written notice of the decision shall indicate the changes in the application that would allow it to meet the Commission's criteria for approval. The applicant has the right to appeal the Commission's criteria for approval. The applicant has the right to appeal the Commission's decision to the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County.
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13. Minutes of the Commission's meetings, records of all votes and the file records of all applications shall be kept in the Preservation Office of the Department of City Planning. All such records may be reviewed by members of the public and any public body or agency upon application in writing to the Commission's staff in the Department of City Planning.

#### E. Special Requirements

Each Commission member and staff attend at least one informational or educational meeting per year, made available or approved by the State Historic Officer pertaining to work and functions of the Commission or to historic preservation.

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