



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING
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Dear Historic District Property Owners:

The City of Alexandria is built upon its past. Our records show that you own a structure located in one of two locally regulated historic districts -- the **Old and Historic Alexandria District (OHAD)** or the **Parker- Gray (P-G) District** -- or you own an individually designated **100-Year-Old Building**. Special architectural protections regulate the exterior of buildings in these areas. Since 1946, the community and the City have worked diligently to preserve the historic resources that create Alexandria's unique character and as owners of properties in historic districts, you are a steward of our collective history.

BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW (BAR) APPROVALS

New construction, demolition and any exterior alterations visible from a public right-of-way (including public alleys and parks) require approval by the Board of Architectural Review (BAR), regardless of the age of the building. Alterations and new construction require a **Certificate of Appropriateness**. Any demolition or capsulation greater than 25 square feet, regardless of visibility, requires a **Permit to Demolish**. *While the Boards do not review paint color, painting of previously unpainted masonry requires a Certificate of Appropriateness.*

Many exterior alterations can be approved administratively by BAR staff within one (1) to three (3) business days. Items that require approvals include replacement doors, siding, roofing and windows as well as the installation of new minor architectural elements such as vents, railings and fences. Last year, 70 percent of requests received administrative approval. Each historic district has different regulations for BAR review and it is best to consult the policies, applications and guidelines found at alexandriava.gov/Preservation or to contact BAR staff.

BAR STAFF IS AVAILABLE TO HELP

Historic Preservation staff within the Department of Planning & Zoning is available to help you navigate the BAR review process. We encourage you, your architect or your contractor to contact staff early in the project planning process to provide enough time in your schedule for the necessary reviews. Please visit our website at alexandriava.gov/Preservation for more information, including the *BAR Design Guidelines* and policies, the *Parker-Gray Residential Reference Guide*, applications, and BAR meeting schedules. Should you have any additional questions, or would like to schedule a pre-application meeting or site visit, please contact the Historic Preservation staff at preservation@alexandriava.gov or 703.746.3833.

Please note, failure to obtain the required BAR Approval or Building Permit before undertaking a project may subject both you and your contractor to monetary fines and other penalties, as specified in the Zoning Ordinance and the Uniform Statewide Building

Code. In addition, you will be required to correct the violation.

BUILDING PERMITS

In many cases, a building permit is also required for work described above. **In the historic districts, building permits are required for replacement of more than 100 square feet of roofing or siding and for the installation of any windows.** Owners can perform the work themselves; however, if you choose to hire a contractor, be advised that only contractors currently licensed by the Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation are permitted. If you have work performed by unlicensed contractors or without the benefit of permits and City approval, your ability to sell or refinance your home or to file insurance policy claims may be affected. Information about whether a building permit is required and whether a contractor is licensed to work in the City of Alexandria may be obtained by calling the Department of Code Administration at 703.746.4200 or from the City's website at alexandriava.gov/Code.

ALEXANDRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

The ground beneath modern Alexandria is a record of the past and contains an array of archaeological sites, features, and artifacts that spans thousands of years of human occupation. Recognizing the importance and uniqueness of these historic resources, the City of Alexandria adopted an Archaeological Protection Code, incorporated into the City's Zoning Ordinance in 1992. This has enabled the recovery of information about Alexandria's history and the preservation of sites that otherwise would have been lost. Homeowners and small-scale developments generally are not required to do archaeology before obtaining building permits as the Code does not apply to these projects. The Code requires developers to work with City archaeologists to evaluate and sometimes excavate archaeological resources before ground disturbance occurs on large-scale construction projects. City archaeologists also partner with homeowners, realtors, and neighborhood groups to search for, study, and share the rich history that is buried underground. Alexandria Archaeology staff also offer preservation assistance before renovation or new construction takes place, if requested. Alexandria Archaeology now manages more than 2 million artifacts collected from more than 200 archaeological sites scattered across the City. The Alexandria Archaeology Museum, on the third floor of the Torpedo Factory Arts Center, showcases some of the successes of the Archaeological Protection Code.

SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH NEIGHBORS

With your help, we can keep Alexandria's historic buildings, sites and districts safe and beautiful for future generations. Every resident and property owner can help to maintain the integrity and character of our historic districts.

Sincerely,



Karl Moritz, Director
Department of Planning
and Zoning



Gregg Fields, Director
Department of Code
Administration



Eleanor Breen, Acting City
Archaeologist
Office of Historic Alexandria