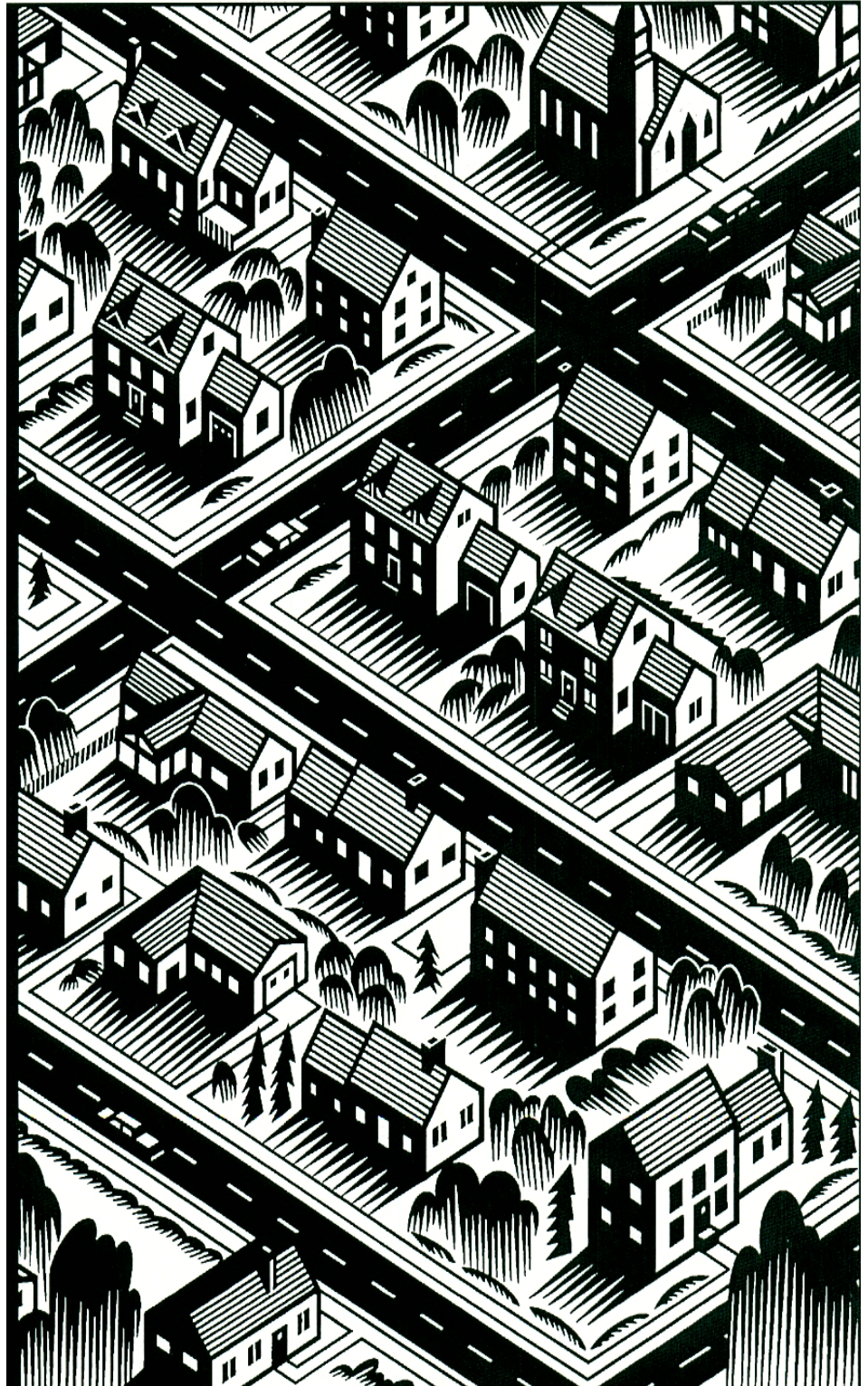


Historic Preservation

A guide to the Design Review Process



THE CITY OF
DUBUQUE
Masterpiece on the Mississippi



Planning Services Department, 50 West 13th Street, Dubuque, IA 52001-4845
(563) 589-4210 e-mail: planning@cityofdubuque.org

DESIGN REVIEW FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Guidelines to help you through the application process.

What is a Design Review?

Design Review is a request to alter the exterior of a property. The Historic Preservation Commission has the authority to allow these changes to properties located in one of the city's historic districts or those individually designated or designated as a landmark or landmark site. The Commission also reviews certain projects in the Historic Millwork District and Downtown Dubuque.

When do I need a Design Review?

You may need to file an application for a Design Review if you want to alter the exterior of your property. Exterior alterations that are subject to Design Review and those changes that are visible from a public right-of-way (streets, alleys, sidewalks and public steps) and require a building permit. The Design Review process is intended to provide an opportunity to create, change or affect the exterior architectural features of the structure or site in a way that will not adversely effect the aesthetic, historic, or architectural significance and value of the property and neighboring properties.

How long does the application process take?

In most cases, the Design Review process takes about 21 days from the application deadline. Filing an application, however, does not guarantee approval.

Who is the Historic Preservation Commission?

The Historic Preservation Commission is a volunteer group of 9 citizens from the community who are appointed by the City Council to meet once a month to make decisions on requests like yours. The Commissioners have various backgrounds and expertise and share an interest in historic preservation, with most of them residing in one of the districts.

What criteria are considered when reviewing a Design Review application?

The Historic Preservation Commission uses the following criteria when reviewing a design review request.

- 1) The Commission is required to apply the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings. The Commission considers the "Guidelines for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings" which are based on the standards.
- 2) The applicant must establish that the alteration complies with the standards for review specified in the Historic Preservation Ordinance, and with Design Guidelines adopted for each district.
- 3) The Commission must consider each request on the merits of the individual case, with deliberation given to the proposed change and its relationship to the historic

DESIGN REVIEW FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Guidelines to help you through the application process.

When presenting your case to the Historic Preservation Commission, try to address each of these criteria very carefully. *While project cost may be your primary concern, it **cannot** be the basis on which a design review request is judged and granted.*

How do I apply for a Design Review?

Attend a pre-application meeting with Planning Services staff before filing an application. Planning staff can assist with compiling supporting documentation for your request and reviewing applicable design guidelines.

To apply for a design review you need to:

- Complete the application form.
- Include detailed plan drawings of the proposed project. The plans should include dimensions, architectural details and label materials. Applications without detailed drawings will not be considered complete and will not be accepted by the Commission.
- Complete the Description of Proposed Project.
- Complete the Design Review Project Worksheet (attached).
- Provide at least one color photograph of the existing structure showing the location of the proposed project.
- Provide a sample of the materials to be used in the proposed project (if not typical wood).
- If the project includes a new sign, please include the design, materials and colors that will be used on the sign face, how the sign will be displayed, hung or mounted and any lighting proposed.
- Submit the above information and any other pertinent information that is available or required by the Historic Preservation Commission or the City Planner that may be necessary to make a determination in the design review.

Please include any other documentation that will help clarify your request and support your position. This information must be submitted by the application deadline. For application deadline dates and other information, please call the Planning Services office at 589-4210.

For information on building and demolition permits, contact the Building Services Department at 589-4150.

For information on excavation in the public right-of-way and curb cuts, contact the Engineering Division at 589-4270.

For information on underground utilities, call Iowa One-Call at 800-292-8989.

Please note: It is your responsibility to locate your property lines and to check your abstract for easements and restrictive covenants.

DESIGN REVIEW FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Guidelines to help you through the application process.

How does Planning Services staff help you through the Design Review Process?

When we receive a complete application, your request will be placed on the agenda for the next available meeting date.

Planning Services staff then will review your application, visit your property, take photos, and compile supporting documentation regarding the request. Planning Services staff will send an agenda and a copy of your application materials to the Historic Preservation Commission approximately one week before the Commission meeting.

Approximately one week before the meeting, you will receive an agenda for the meeting.

Do I need to be at the meeting?

Yes. You or your representative must present your request to the Historic Preservation Commission and be available to answer questions, if needed. If you or your representative aren't at the meeting, your application will be tabled and your project will be delayed.

What happens at the meeting?

At the meeting, both Planning Services staff and you or your representative will make presentations to the Commission. The meeting is open to the public, who may be asked to comment on your request. The Commission will approve, deny, modify, or table your request for more information.

What happens next?

If approved, you may apply for a building or demolition permit from the Building Services Department the next day. Please note that housing and building codes may further limit the location or configurations of your project.

If denied, you may appeal the Historic Preservation Commission's decision to the City Council within 30 days of written notification of the denial, or submit a revised proposal to the Planning Services Department.

This guide is not intended to cover every aspect of the design review application process. It should not be considered the final or definitive authority on any of the matters it addresses. It is only a general guide. Questions on specific projects should be addressed to the Planning Services Department, 50 W. 13th Street, Dubuque, Iowa 52001, phone (563) 589-4210, fax (563) 589-4221; e-mail: planning@cityofdubuque.org.

Attachments:

- Application Form
- Description of Proposed Project Worksheet
- Meeting Schedule
- Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

Revised 08_03_10

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

The following Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

- 1) A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
- 2) The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
- 3) Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
- 4) Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
- 5) Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
- 6) Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
- 7) Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
- 8) Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
- 9) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
- 10) New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

As stated in the definition, the treatment "rehabilitation" assumes that at least some repair or alteration of the historic building will be needed in order to provide for an efficient contemporary use; however, these repairs and alteration must not damage or destroy materials, features or finishes that are important in defining the building's historic character. For example, certain treatments—if improperly applied—may cause or accelerate physical deterioration of historic building. This can include using improper repainting or exterior masonry cleaning techniques, or introducing insulation that damages historic fabric. In almost all of these situations, use of these materials and treatments will result in a project that does not meet the Standards. Similarly, exterior additions that duplicate the form, material, and detailing of the structure to the extent that they compromise the historic character of the structure will fail to meet the Standards.

Technical Guidance Publications

The National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, conducts a variety of activities to guide Federal agencies, States, and the general public in historic preservation project work. In addition to establishing standards and guidelines, the Service develops, publishes, and distributes technical information on appropriate preservation treatments, including Preservation Briefs, case studies and Preservation Tech Notes. Additional information can be obtained at www.nps.gov.

The *Architectural Guidelines for Historic Structures in the Historic Districts of the City of Dubuque* are available on the City of Dubuque website: www.cityofdubuque.org. The City of Dubuque website also contains information and numerous resources for planning a rehabilitation project.

APPLICATION FORM

Zoning Advisory Commission

- ☐ Amended PUD
- ☐ Rezoning/PUD/ID
- ☐ Text Amendment
- ☐ Simple Subdivision
- ☐ Preliminary Plat
- ☐ Major Final Plat
- ☐ Minor Final Plat
- ☐ Waiver from Site Design Standards

Zoning Board of Adjustment

- ☐ Conditional Use Permit
- ☐ Special Exception
- ☐ Variance
- ☐ Appeal

Development Services

- ☐ Annexation
- ☐ Limited Setback Waiver
- ☐ Site Plan Simple
- ☐ Site Plan Minor
- ☐ Site Plan Major
- ☐ Simple Subdivision
- ☐ Temporary Use Permit
- ☐ Port of Dubuque/
Chaplain Schmitt Island
Design Review

Historic Preservation Commission

- ☐ Demolition Review
- ☐ Historic Revolving Loan
- ☐ Certificate of Economic Non-Viability
- ☐ Design Review Certificate of Appropriateness
- ☐ Advisory Design Review (Public Projects)
- ☐ Historic Designation

Please complete the applicable sections below. Please type or print legibly.

A. Property Information

Site Location/Address: _____

Legal Description/Parcel ID#/Subdivision: _____

Existing Zoning: _____ Proposed Zoning: _____ Site Area (square feet/acres): _____

Historic District: _____ Landmark: ☐ Yes ☐ No

B. Describe proposal and reason for application (attach a letter of explanation, if necessary):

C. Applicant/Agent Information

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

D. Property Owner(s) Information

Name(s): _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

E. Certification: I/we, the undersigned, do hereby certify/acknowledge that:

1. Payment does not guarantee approval and fees are nonrefundable;
2. All additional required written and graphic materials are attached;
3. It is the property owner's responsibility to locate property lines and to review the abstract for easements and restrictive covenants; and
4. The information submitted herein is true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge and upon submittal becomes public record.

Applicant/Agent: _____ Date: _____

Property Owner(s): _____ Date: _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Fee \$ _____ Ck# _____ ☐ CC ☐ Cash Received by _____ Date _____

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT

(use additional pages as needed)

1) Please describe your project, indicating the existing materials and their condition and the reason for the proposed work:

2) Please indicate the type of construction materials to be used in this project:

3) What alternative remedies have you considered to solve your problem or meet your needs?

4) What is your timeline for completion of the proposed project?

5) What is the estimated project cost?

6) Will you do the work yourself, or use a contractor? Please provide name of contractor.

7) Any other information or comments?

Signature

Date

DESIGN REVIEW CHECKLIST

The following required information is needed to assist the Historic Preservation Commission in understanding your proposed project. You are urged to bring any other items or information that would help describe what your project will look like and how it will impact the existing structure and/or the neighborhood.

- Completed application form.
- Detailed plan drawings of the proposed project. The plans must include dimensions, architectural details and label materials. Applications without detailed drawings will not be considered complete and will not be accepted by the Commission.
- Completed Description of Proposed Project.
- Design Review Project Worksheet.
- At least one color photograph of the existing structure showing the location of the proposed project.
- A sample of the materials to be used in the proposed project (if not typical wood).
- If the project includes a new sign, include the design, materials and colors that will be used on the sign face, how the sign will be displayed, hung or mounted and any lighting proposed.
- Submit the above information and any other pertinent information that is available or required by the Historic Preservation Commission or the City Planner that may be necessary to make a determination in the design

Board and Commission Meeting Schedule January-December 2026

Submit Application to:		Long Range Planning Advisory Commission (LRPAC)	Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)	Port of Dubuque/ Chaplain Schmitt Island Design Review	Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA)	Zoning Advisory Commission (ZAC)	City Council	
Planning Services Department City of Dubuque 50 W. 13th Street Dubuque, IA 52001 planning@cityofdubuque.org		Meets Monthly	3rd Wednesday 5:30 p.m.	3rd Thursday 5:30 p.m.	4th Wednesday 3:00 p.m.	4th Thursday 5:30 p.m.	1st Wednesday 6:00 p.m.	3rd Monday 6:30 p.m.
* Agenda link		cityofdubuque.org/LRPAC	cityofdubuque.org/HPC	Design Guidelines	cityofdubuque.org/ZBA	cityofdubuque.org/ZAC	cityofdubuque.novusagenda.com/AgendaPublic/	
APPLICATION DUE BY	MEETING DATE	Dec 01	Dec 17	Dec 18	Dec 17	Dec 18	Jan 07	Tues. Jan 20
		Jan 05	Jan 21	Jan 15	Jan 28	Jan 22	Feb 04	Feb 16
		Feb 02	Feb 18	Feb 19	Feb 25	Feb 26	Mar 04	Mar 16
		Mar 02	Mar 18	Mar 19	Mar 25	Mar 26	Apr 01	Apr 20
		Mar 30	Apr 15	Apr 16	Apr 22	Apr 23	May 06	May 18
		May 04	May 20	May 21	May 27	May 28	Jun 03	Jun 15
		Jun 01	Jun 17	Jun 18	Jun 24	Jun 25	Jul 01	Jul 20
		Jun 29	Jul 15	Jul 16	Jul 22	Jul 23	Aug 05	Aug 17
		Aug 03	Aug 19	Aug 20	Aug 26	Aug 27	Sep 02	Sep 21
		Aug 31	Sep 16	Sep 17	Sep 23	Sep 24	Oct 07	Oct 19
		Sep 28	Oct 21	Oct 15	Oct 28	Oct 22	Nov 04	Nov 16
		Oct 26	Nov 18	Nov 19	Nov 18	Nov 19	Dec 02	Dec 21
		Nov 30	Dec 16	Dec 17	Dec 16	Dec 17	Jan 06	Tues. Jan 19

* Agenda contains meeting location information.

The agenda link connects to the Board or Commission website home page.

Scroll to 'Agendas & Minutes' and click on 'Most Recent Agenda'

Board and Commission Meeting Schedule January-December 2026

Submit Application to:		Long Range Planning Advisory Commission (LRPAC)	Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)	Port of Dubuque/ Chaplain Schmitt Island Design Review	Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA)	Zoning Advisory Commission (ZAC)	City Council	
Planning Services Department City of Dubuque 50 W. 13th Street Dubuque, IA 52001 planning@cityofdubuque.org		Meets Monthly * Agenda link	3rd Wednesday 5:30 p.m. cityofdubuque.org/LRPAC	3rd Thursday 5:30 p.m. cityofdubuque.org/HPC	4th Wednesday 3:00 p.m. Design Guidelines	4th Thursday 5:30 p.m. cityofdubuque.org/ZBA	1st Wednesday 6:00 p.m. cityofdubuque.org/ZAC	3rd Monday 6:30 p.m. cityofdubuque.novusagenda.com/AgendaPublic/
APPLICATION DUE BY	Dec 01	MEETING DATE	Dec 17	Dec 18	Dec 17	Dec 18	Jan 07	Tues. Jan 20
	Jan 05		Jan 21	Jan 15	Jan 28	Jan 22	Feb 04	Feb 16
	Feb 02		Feb 18	Feb 19	Feb 25	Feb 26	Mar 04	Mar 16
	Mar 02		Mar 18	Mar 19	Mar 25	Mar 26	Apr 01	Apr 20
	Mar 30		Apr 15	Apr 16	Apr 22	Apr 23	May 06	May 18
	May 04		May 20	May 21	May 27	May 28	Jun 03	Jun 15
	Jun 01		Jun 17	Jun 18	Jun 24	Jun 25	Jul 01	Jul 20
	Jun 29		Jul 15	Jul 16	Jul 22	Jul 23	Aug 05	Aug 17
	Aug 03		Aug 19	Aug 20	Aug 26	Aug 27	Sep 02	Sep 21
	Aug 31		Sep 16	Sep 17	Sep 23	Sep 24	Oct 07	Oct 19
	Sep 28		Oct 21	Oct 15	Oct 28	Oct 22	Nov 04	Nov 16
	Oct 26		Nov 18	Nov 19	Nov 18	Nov 19	Dec 02	Dec 21
	Nov 30		Dec 16	Dec 17	Dec 16	Dec 17	Jan 06	Tues. Jan 19

* Agenda contains meeting location information.

The agenda link connects to the Board or Commission website home page.

Scroll to 'Agendas & Minutes' and click on 'Most Recent Agenda'