



Historic District Commission

Staff Communication – Administrative Approval of Certificate of Appropriateness Applications

Summary Report

TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL PLANNING DEPARTMENT
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The following Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications have been reviewed and approved by Planning Department staff as of September 26, 2025:

Project#/Address	Description of Work	Approval Authority (page 9-11 of the Chapel Hill Historic Districts Design Principles & Standards)	Chapel Hill Historic Districts Design Principles & Standards	Date Approved
#HDC-24-29 304 N. Boundary Street	Extension for a previously approved certificate of appropriateness for an addition	Staff can approve an extension of up to 12 months under the following circumstances: • The certificate holder submitted the extension request within 60 days of the expiration date, • The certificate holder has proceeded with due diligence and good faith, and • Conditions have not changed so substantially as to warrant commission reconsideration of the approved project.	Not applicable	August 22, 2025
#HDC-25-16 412 E. Rosemary Street	Construction of fence	Staff can approve a COA for minor works for wood fences no more than 6 ft. in height and not visible from the public right-of-way.	1.3.6. Site new walls and fences in configurations and locations that are compatible with the character of the building, site, and district and consistent with the location and height of other walls and fences in the district. 1.3.8. Construct new front- and side-yard fences using traditional materials and designs that are compatible in configuration, height, material, scale, and detail with the character of the building, site, and district. a. Front- and side-yard fences, in front of the rear corner of the main block of the building, should generally not exceed 30" in height, should be constructed of wood or metal with structural members facing inward to the property, and must be painted or sealed. b. Temporary, light-gauge wire fencing may be constructed as necessary to keep	August 1, 2025

			animals out of gardens, side, and rear yards. c. Chain link, vinyl, or split rail fences are not appropriate. 1.3.9. Introduce contemporary utilitarian walls and fences in rear yards only where they do not compromise the historic character of the building, site, or district. a. Wood, composite, or chain link fences exceeding 30" in height should be relegated to rear yards, beginning beyond the rear corner of the main block of the building and should be screened with landscaping materials as much as possible. b. Sites with significant variations in topography should consider segmented walls and fences that step up and down to follow the topography.	
#HDC-22-11 313 E Franklin Street	Change the approved black pipe rail guardrail along the back wall (the northwest corner of site) to a 4' wood fence; and rotate the trash enclosure located at the eastern side of the house near the drive entry	• Minor changes not previously approved by the Commission on site plans or minor changes to elevations not visible from the street. Any minor changes should not significantly alter the design, materials, scale, massing, or overall appearance of the site or structure as shown on the HDC-approved plans • Changes deemed by Town Staff to not be substantial in nature	1.2.7. Locate necessary street furniture, trash receptacles, mailboxes, newspaper racks, and similar elements in locations that do not compromise, but instead complement the historic character of the streetscape. Select benches and other street furniture that are compatible with the historic district in design, scale, and materials. 1.3.1. Retain and preserve the materials and decorative and functional features of walls and fences that contribute to the overall historic character of sites within the historic districts. These include, but are not limited to the overall form, materials, patterns, dimensions, textures, configurations, and details. 1.3.5. If a historic wall or fence is completely missing, or if deterioration necessitates its replacement, replace it to match the original in material, design, dimension, pattern, detail, texture, and color, based upon physical and documentary evidence. Otherwise, replace it with a new feature that is compatible in material, design, scale, and detail with the building, site, and district. 1.3.6. Site new walls and fences in configurations and locations that are	June 20, 2025

			compatible with the character of the building, site, and district and consistent with the location and height of other walls and fences in the district.	
#HDC-25-7 702 E. Franklin Street	Installation of an electric vehicle charger	Mechanical equipment, such as HVAC units and generators, located in rear or side yards not visible from the street and screened by vegetation or fences.	3.9.7. Locate new mechanical equipment, utilities, and sustainable site features—including air-conditioning and heating units, meters, exposed pipes, rain barrels or cisterns, and raised planting beds—in locations that are minimally visible from the street and do not alter or remove historic fabric from the building or do not diminish or compromise the overall character of the building, site, or district. Screen ground-level equipment from view with vegetation or fencing.	April 17, 2025
#HDC-25-2 698 Gimghoul Road	Installation of Google fiber in the public right-of-way.	Mechanical equipment, such as HVAC units and generators, located in rear or side yards not visible from the street and screened by vegetation or fences.	1.2.7. Locate necessary street furniture, trash receptacles, mailboxes, newspaper racks, and similar elements in locations that do not compromise, but instead complement the historic character of the streetscape. Select benches and other street furniture that are compatible with the historic district in design, scale, and materials. 1.2.8. Minimize the introduction of additional transformers, utility poles, wires, and cables in the public rights-of-way. Seek less intrusive locations for such elements to reduce their impact on the mature tree canopy and the historic streetscape. Consider painting equipment and exposed utilities to complement mounting surfaces or screening them with vegetation to reduce their visibility. Consider the introduction of underground utility lines where feasible.	01.29.2025
#HDC-25-1 510-520 Hooper Lane and 105 S. Boundary Street	Installation of Google fiber in the public right-of-way.	Mechanical equipment, such as HVAC units and generators, located in rear or side yards not visible from the street and screened by vegetation or fences.	1.2.7. Locate necessary street furniture, trash receptacles, mailboxes, newspaper racks, and similar elements in locations that do not compromise, but instead complement the historic character of the streetscape. Select benches and other street furniture that are compatible with the historic district in design, scale, and materials. 1.2.8. Minimize the introduction of additional transformers, utility poles, wires, and cables in the public rights-of-way. Seek less intrusive	01.28.2025

			locations for such elements to reduce their impact on the mature tree canopy and the historic streetscape. Consider painting equipment and exposed utilities to complement mounting surfaces or screening them with vegetation to reduce their visibility. Consider the introduction of underground utility lines where feasible.	
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The following requests for maintenance and repair have been reviewed by Planning Department staff as of September 26, 2025. No Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is required for maintenance, in accordance with [Land Use Management Ordinance \(LUMO\) 3.6.2](#)¹:

(1) Nothing in this article shall be construed to prevent the ordinary maintenance or repair of any exterior architectural feature in the historic district that does not involve a change in design, material, or outer appearance thereof, or to prevent the construction, reconstruction, alteration, restoration, moving, or demolition of any such feature that the building inspector or similar official shall certify is required by the public safety because of unsafe or dangerous condition.

(2) On the basis of preliminary sketches or drawings and other supporting data, the town manager may exempt from requirements for a certificate of appropriateness projects involving the ordinary maintenance or repair of any exterior architectural feature that does not involve a change in design, material, or outer appearance thereof. The town manager shall notify the commission of all such exemptions.

Address	Description of Work	Date Memo Issued
#HDC-25-21 407 Ransom Street	Emergency water line replacement	September 23, 2025
#HDC-25-18 208 Cottage Lane	Repainting building's exterior	August 22, 2025
#HDC-25-12 218 Pittsboro	Repair existing brick walkway.	June 5, 2025
#HDC-25-10 422 W. Cameron Avenue	Repair and repaint existing metal roof.	May 2, 2025

¹ https://library.municode.com/nc/chapel_hill/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CO_APXALOUSMA_ART3ZODIUSDIST_3.6OVDI