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# PLANNING BOARD MEMORANDUM

Town of Forest City, 128 N Powell St, Forest City NC, 28043

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**TO:** Board of Commissioners  
**FROM:** Planning Board/Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)  
**DATE:** September 16, 2019  
**SUBJECT:** Historic Preservation: Adoption of Design Guidelines

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Historic properties designated as local landmarks require guidelines that establish what types of exterior alterations are appropriate relative to the historical character of the property. Once a property is designated as a local historic landmark, the owner cannot demolish, move, or alter its exterior features without a certificate of appropriateness (COA) issued either by the HPC in the case of major works or by staff in the case of minor works (see Page 8, Attachment A for a description of major and minor works).

The HPC recommends the adoption of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties as the Town's Design Guidelines by amendment of the Historic Preservation Ordinance (see Page 10, Attachment B for the recommended ordinance amendment). The Secretary's Standards are used by similar towns in North Carolina as Historic Design Guidelines. The Standards pertain to historic buildings of all materials, styles, sizes, and occupancy, related landscape features and the building's site and environment, as well as related new construction.

The Secretary's Standards consist of four distinct categories to the treatment of historic properties: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. Each of the four categories includes similar, but distinct standards, as well as technical guidance on when specific treatments may be the most appropriate for a landmark structure.

Pages 2-7 contain a summary of the Secretary's Standards. A comprehensive, illustrated guide to the standards can be found at the following link:

<http://tiny.cc/9p26az>

Finally, the HPC recommends the Board of Commissioners formally launch the process to designate the Florence Mill as a local historic landmark, beginning with the landmark designation report (see Page 11, Attachment C).

## Preservation

When the property's distinctive materials, features, and spaces are essentially intact and thus convey the historic significance without extensive repair or replacement; when depiction at a particular period of time is not appropriate; and when a continuing or new use does not require additions or extensive alterations, Preservation may be considered as a treatment.

### Standards:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that maximizes the retention of distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships. Where a treatment and use have not been identified, a property will be protected and, if necessary, stabilized until additional work may be undertaken.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The replacement of intact or repairable historic materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate and conserve existing historic materials and features will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection and properly documented for future research.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. The existing condition of historic features will be evaluated to determine the appropriate level of intervention needed. Where the severity of deterioration requires repair or limited replacement of a distinctive feature, the new material will match the old in composition, design, color, and texture.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

## Rehabilitation

When repair and replacement of deteriorated features are necessary; when alterations or additions to the property are planned for a new or continued use; and when its depiction at a particular period is not appropriate, Rehabilitation may be considered as a treatment.

### Standards:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will 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 elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible

with the historic materials, features, size, scale, and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will 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.

## Restoration

When the property's design, architectural, or historical significance during a particular period of time outweighs the potential loss of extant materials, features, spaces, and finishes that characterize other historical periods; when there is substantial physical and documentary evidence for the work; and when contemporary alterations and additions are not planned, Restoration may be considered as a treatment. Prior to undertaking work, a particular period of time, i.e., the restoration period, should be selected and justified, and a documentation plan for Restoration developed.

### Standards:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that interprets the property and its restoration period.
2. Materials and features from the restoration period will be retained and preserved. The removal of materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize the period will not be undertaken.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate and conserve materials and features from the restoration period will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection and properly documented for future research.
4. Materials, features, spaces, and finishes that characterize other historical periods will be documented prior to their alteration or removal.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize the restoration period will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated features from the restoration period will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials.
7. Replacement of missing features from the restoration period will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence. A false sense of history will not be created by adding conjectural features, features from other properties, or by combining features that never existed together historically.
8. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

9. Archeological resources affected by a project will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
10. Designs that were never executed historically will not be constructed.

## Reconstruction

When a contemporary depiction is required to understand and interpret a property's historic value (including the re-creation of missing components in a historic district or site); when no other property with the same associative value has survived; and when sufficient historical documentation exists to ensure an accurate reproduction, Reconstruction may be considered as a treatment.

### Standards

1. Reconstruction will be used to depict vanished or non-surviving portions of a property when documentary and physical evidence is available to permit accurate reconstruction with minimal conjecture, and such reconstruction is essential to the public understanding of the property.
2. Reconstruction of a landscape, building, structure or object in its historic location will be preceded by a thorough archeological investigation to identify and evaluate those features and artifacts that are essential to an accurate reconstruction. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
3. Reconstruction will include measures to preserve any remaining historic materials, features and spatial relationships.
4. Reconstruction will be based on the accurate duplication of historic features and elements substantiated by documentary or physical evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different features from other historic properties. A reconstructed property will re-create the appearance of the non-surviving historic property in materials, design, color, and texture.
5. A reconstruction will be clearly identified as a contemporary re-creation.
6. Designs that were never executed historically will not be constructed.

## **Attachment A – Certificate of Appropriateness Required**

[No Action Required]

### *Adopted in the HPC Rules of Procedure*

#### 6.1 Minor Works

The following types of minor work may be granted a Minor Certificate of Appropriateness by the Staff Historic Preservation Officer:

- ✓ Storm doors or windows
- ✓ Fences
- ✓ Shutters or blinds
- ✓ Temporary handicap facilities
- ✓ Primer or paint colors
- ✓ Garage doors
- ✓ Signs
- ✓ Roofing material and awnings
- ✓ Rear yard decks or porches
- ✓ Brick walkways, paths, driveways, and patios
- ✓ Removal of asbestos siding
- ✓ Restoration of original features
- ✓ Ordinary maintenance

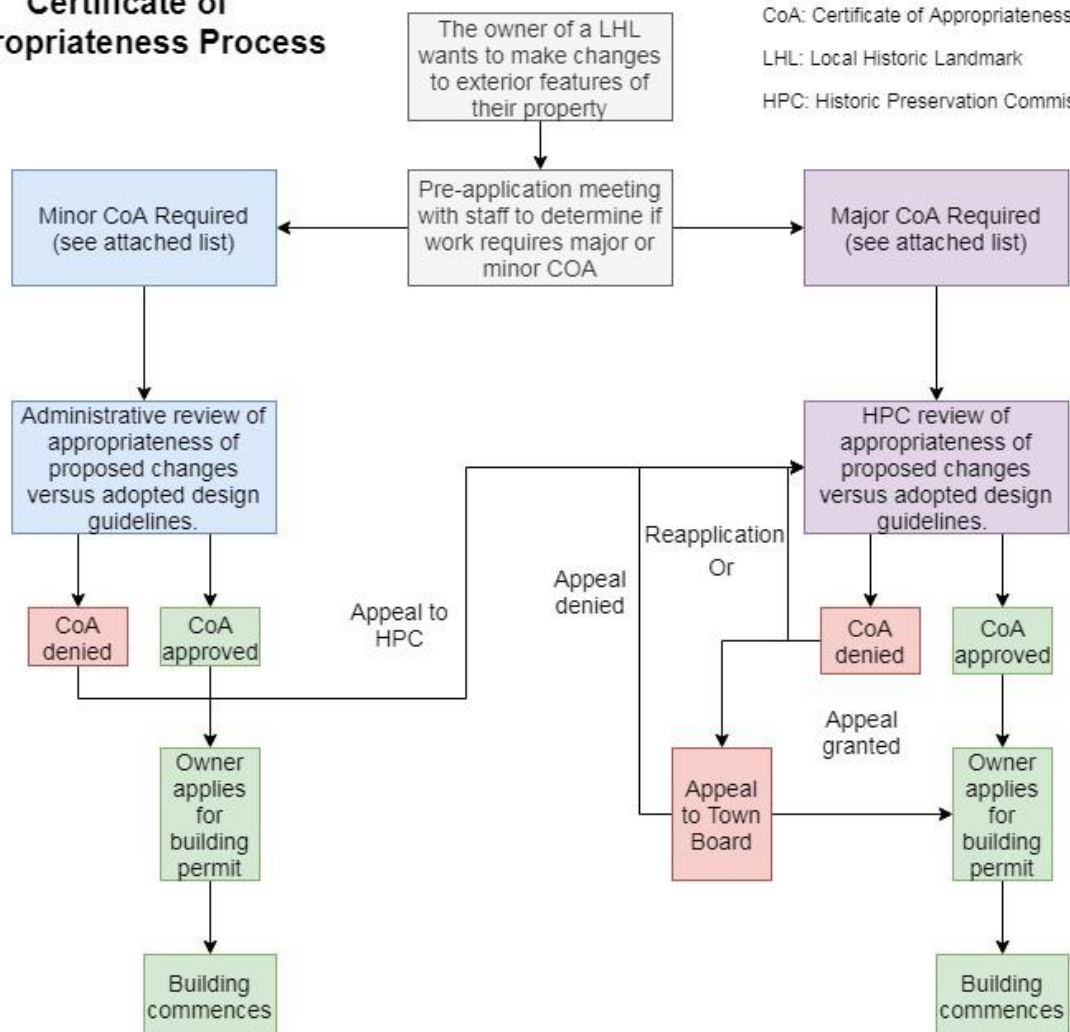
#### 6.2 Major Works

The following types of major work shall require a Major Certificate of Appropriateness granted by the Historic Preservation Commission:

- ✓ Decks and swimming pools
- ✓ Lighting
- ✓ Roofs
- ✓ Windows and doors
- ✓ Painting masonry
- ✓ Exterior siding and decorative woodwork
- ✓ Porches and entrances
- ✓ Architectural metals
- ✓ New construction or additions including accessory structures
- ✓ Storefronts
- ✓ Relocation or demolition of buildings and structures
- ✓ Major landscaping
- ✓ New building and parking lots



## Certificate of Appropriateness Process



## Glossary

CoA: Certificate of Appropriateness

LHL: Local Historic Landmark

HPC: Historic Preservation Commission

## **Attachment B - Amendment to the Historic Preservation Ordinance**

[Motion Required]

The Historic Preservation Commission unanimously recommends the following amended text:

### **7.2 Review Guidelines**

Prior to the designation of any historic landmark or district, the Commission shall prepare and adopt guidelines not inconsistent with G.S. 160A-400.1 – 400.14 for constructing, altering, restoring, rehabilitating, relocating, removing, or demolishing of property designated as historic, which guidelines shall ensure, insofar as possible, that changes in designated landmarks or properties located within designated districts shall be in harmony with the reasons for designation.

The Town has adopted the Secretary of the Interior ' s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties as its Design Guidelines for all designated local historic landmarks and designated local historic districts.

## Attachment C - Florence Mill Landmark Designation

[Motion Required]

The Board of Commissioners is requested to formally begin Florence Mill Local Historic Landmark Designation. Staff has contacted Heather Fearnbach of Fearnbach Preservation Services to write the Local Landmark Report. Heather previously wrote the Florence Mill National Register nomination and has estimated the Local Landmark Report will require 64 hours of labor to complete. She will be onsite in late September to begin work.

Below is a timeline of remaining actions related to the Florence Mill Local Landmark Designation:

