

A Property Owner's Guide to The Centerville Architectural Preservation District

Centerville is an appealing community for many reasons. Attractive and peaceful neighborhoods, quality schools and parks, a professional business base, and a tradition of spirited community events contribute to the city's honored reputation. As a property owner in the Centerville Architectural Preservation District (APD), you are an important part of the city's most unique local feature.

The APD reflects the "Main Street" downtown form that shaped American towns and cities prior to the mid-twentieth century. Most of the buildings have a shallow setback from the street. The lots are typically narrow and deep. Many of the buildings in the district were built prior to the Second World War, representing a diverse body of historic architectural styles. The richness of craftsmanship and detail in these buildings make them a valuable asset to the Centerville community.

Because of the APD's value to the community, the City of Centerville has established a design review program for the district. There are two components to the program. The first component consists of design regulations that are intended to preserve the architectural character and appearance of the district. The regulations are a part of the Centerville Zoning Ordinance and apply to any property zoned A-P, Architectural Preservation. The second component is the Board of Architectural Review. The duties of the Board include administering the APD regulations and reviewing requests for property alterations.

Participation in the design review program is mandatory for all APD property owners and tenants. This is necessary for the design regulations to be truly effective.

CALL BEFORE YOU COMMIT

Before signing a contract or making a purchase for a project on your APD property, contact the City Planning Department, (937) 433-7151, about your proposal. Planning staff can provide you with necessary information regarding required approvals and applicable requirements. Work performed without required approvals is a violation of City codes and is subject to penalties, including the removal of installed items.

ZONING APPROVAL REQUIRED

Any alteration to an existing building that involves a change in size, form, materials, color, wall openings (including windows and doors), architectural features (including awnings), or signs is subject to approval by the City. New construction, including principal and accessory buildings, fences, walls, and parking areas are also subject to approval. Temporary buildings and signs require approval and are limited in duration. The extent of the approval process depends upon the nature of the project.

ZONING APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED

Zoning approval is not required for ornamental landscaping, changes to building interiors, or building repairs. A building permit may be required, however.

PERMITTED

See ZONING APPROVAL REQUIRED

- Buildings with a ground floor area of 5,000 square feet or less
- Simple, solid, rectangular building forms
- Color schemes from the official BAR Color Chart
- Flags bearing non-commercial messages
- Roof styles: gable, gambrel or hip
- Siding materials: brick, stone or wood
- Signs: externally illuminated (light bulbs must be shielded from direct view)
- Signs: one ground or projecting sign per property (size restrictions apply)
- Signs: one wall sign per business (size restrictions apply)
- Signs: unlimited window signs not to exceed 25% area coverage per window

PROHIBITED

- Buildings with a ground floor area greater than 5,000 square feet
- Cleaning: sandblasting, waterblasting, or chemical cleaners (on limestone)
- Flags bearing commercial messages (i.e. OPEN, SALE, SPECIAL, etc.)
- Roof styles: flat, Mansard, false fronts, shed, others not specifically permitted
- Siding materials: aluminum or other metals, concrete, concrete panels, concrete block, exposed aggregate, E.I.F.S., granite, marble, stucco, vinyl, others not specifically permitted
- Signs: internally illuminated
- Signs: multiple ground or projecting signs
- Signs: multiple wall signs for a single business

NOTE

The tables above feature the major do's and don'ts of the APD Regulations. However, not all requirements are listed. The tables are to be used as a guide only and are not a substitute for the complete APD Regulations contained in the Zoning Ordinance. A copy of the Zoning Ordinance is on file at the Centerville Planning Department, 100 West Spring Valley Road. Public inquiries are encouraged.

ADMINISTRATION

The CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT is the primary contact for the Architectural Preservation District. Planning staff assist the Board of Architectural Review and the Planning Commission with review and approval of applications pertaining to the APD. (937) 433-7151.

The BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW (BAR) is a seven-member volunteer board appointed by the City Council to review applications regarding APD buildings and signs. BAR regular meetings are scheduled on the first and third Tuesday of each month.

The CITY PLANNING COMMISSION is another seven-member appointed volunteer board. Its duties include reviewing applications regarding site design. Planning Commission regular meetings are scheduled on the second and last Tuesday of each month.

The BUILDING INSPECTION DEPARTMENT is responsible for reviewing construction plans, performing inspections, and issuing Certificates of Occupancy. A change of use or tenant requires an inspection and a new Certificate of Occupancy. If construction is involved, plans must be submitted for review by the Plans Examiner. (937) 428-4786.

Centerville residents interested in serving on the Board of Architectural Review or the Planning Commission should contact the Clerk of Council at (937) 433-7151.

ASSISTANCE

The City of Centerville is vitally interested in the welfare of its business citizens. The City is particularly interested in assisting smaller businesses that express an interest in relocating to the Architectural Preservation District. The APD is appealing to many small retailers and professionals who favor the diverse architecture and historical context of the district. The Centerville Economic Development Administrator is always available to assist businesses with finding a home in the APD. To learn what is involved in locating in this unique part of Centerville, contact the Economic Development Administrator at (937) 428-4766.

APD properties have the exclusive privilege of eligibility for the Centerville Property Tax Abatement Program. Any property that receives improvements which increase the tax valuation of the property may request to have the additional tax value abated for up to 15 years. The work must be completed prior to filing a tax abatement application with the City. Proof of increased property valuation is required. The property must be maintained for the duration of the abatement period. For more information, contact the City Planning Department at (937) 433-7151.