

CLEVELAND LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PROCESS REGARDING APPLICATIONS FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS – DEMOLITION

§ 161.05 Regulation of Environmental Changes; Certificate of Appropriateness

No person owning, renting or occupying property which has been designated a landmark or which is situated in a designated landmark district shall make any environmental change in such property unless a certificate of appropriateness has been previously issued by the Commission with respect to such environmental change. The following procedures shall apply to all alterations, demolitions, removals or constructions of such property in the City:

(a) Any application to the Division of Building and Housing for a building permit for an environmental change shall also be deemed an application for a certificate of appropriateness, and shall be forwarded to the Commission, together with copies of all detailed plans, designs, elevations, specifications and documents relating thereto, within seven (7) days after receipt thereof. An application for a certificate of appropriateness may be filed by the applicant directly with the Commission at the same time that an application for a building permit is filed or in lieu of filing for a building permit, if no building permit is required for the proposed environmental change.

(b) The Commission shall evaluate applications to determine whether or not the environmental change proposed by the applicant will adversely affect any significant historical or aesthetic feature of the property and to determine whether or not the environmental change proposed by the applicant is consistent with the spirit and purposes of this chapter.

(1) In evaluating applications for alterations or construction of property, the Commission shall consider the following standards created by the U.S. Department of the Interior:

A. 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;

B. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alternation of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided;

C. 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;

D. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved;

E. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved;

F. 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;

G. 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;

H. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken;

I. 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; and

J. 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.

(2) In evaluating applications for demolition or removal of property, the Commission shall consider the following standards:

A. The architectural and historic significance of the subject building or structure;

B. The significance of the building or structure in contributing to the architectural or historic character of its environs;

C. In the case of a request to move a building or other structure, the relationship between the location of the subject building or structure and its overall significance;

D. The present and potential economic viability of the subject building or structure, given its physical condition and marketability;

E. If the demolition will remedy conditions imminently dangerous to life, health, or property, as determined in writing by the Division of Building and Housing, the Division of Fire or the Department of Public Health; and

F. The appropriateness of the proposed new structure or use and its impact on the surrounding community.

(c) If the Commission finds that the environmental change proposed by the applicant will not adversely affect any significant historical or aesthetic feature of the property and is appropriate and consistent with the spirit and purposes of this chapter, or will remedy conditions imminently dangerous to life, health or property, as determined in writing by the Division of Building and Housing or the Division of Fire or the Department of Public Health, then the Commission shall issue a certificate of appropriateness.

(d) If the Commission finds that the environmental change proposed by the applicant will adversely affect any significant historical or aesthetic feature of the property or is inappropriate or inconsistent with the spirit and purposes of this chapter, the Commission may either deny the application or delay action on the application. Any decision to delay action on the application

shall be by mutual agreement of the Commission and the applicant and shall be for a period not to exceed six (6) months. During the delay period, the Commission shall conduct further investigation with regard to the proposed environmental change, conduct negotiations with the applicant and any other party in an effort to find a means of preserving the property, or explore alternatives to the proposed environmental change. The Commission may also investigate the feasibility of all available ways and means of preserving the improvement, including without limitation, inducing by contract or other consideration the creation of covenants restricting the use of property, leasing and subleasing the property for the purposes of preservation and acquiring by eminent domain or contract or conveyance all or any part of or interest in the property.

(e) At the end of the delay period, the Commission shall either approve or deny the application, or delay action. A decision to delay action, at the end of one (1) delay period, shall be by mutual agreement of the Commission and the applicant and shall be for a period not to exceed six (6) months. The Commission shall only agree to a second and final delay period if the Commission determines that this additional time period may be useful in securing an alternative to the proposed environmental change. At the end of the second and final delay period, the Commission shall either approve or deny the application for a certificate of appropriateness.

(f) Upon the issuance, denial or a delay in the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness, the Commission shall give written notices of the issuance, denial or delay in the issuance to the applicant and the Division of Building and Housing. The Commission shall provide written notice of the issuance, denial or delay in the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness to the applicant and the Division of Building and Housing within forty-five (45) days of the receipt by the Commission of an application from either the applicant or the Division of Building and Housing.

(g) If no action has been taken by the Commission on an application for a certificate of appropriateness to approve, deny or delay action within forty-five (45) days after such application has been received by the Commission, the certificate of appropriateness shall be deemed issued.

(Ord. No. 1486-01. Passed 3-25-02, eff. 3-28-02)

When reviewing applications for demolition, in addition to the above, it is the policy of the Landmarks Commission to require the following:

- 1.) A site visit to the property in order to help the Commission evaluate the current condition of the property;
- 2.) An approved plan for the property subsequent to demolition, including, but not limited to, landscaping, site improvements, new construction, or other to replace the demolished building;
- 3.) Approval of the demolition may also include a requirement for photography or other documentation prior to demolition;
- 4.) Approval of the demolition may also include a requirement for a plan to salvage or repurpose significant architectural or other features prior to or as part of the demolition.