

## HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESS

If your property is located within the Kensington Historic District, you may need a Historic Area Work Permit (HAWP) before initiating any exterior work. Before a HAWP can be issued, the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission – made of up nine county residents with a background and/or interest in history, preservation, architecture and urban design – must review the project to determine that it meets criteria established in the Historic Preservation Ordinance. There are some exceptions to the type of work that requires a HAWP, so call the historic preservation office early in your planning process to discuss your project. Contact information and instruction materials are available at [www.montgomeryplanning.org/historic](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/historic).

The Historic Preservation Commission is charged with using established criteria to determine whether a proposal should be approved. The goal is to ensure that the work is compatible with the Kensington Historic District. To do this, the Commission uses national preservation standards, called *the Secretary of Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation* ([www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm)), a survey of the physical characteristics of Kensington (called *The Vision of Kensington, a Long-Range Preservation Plan*), and approval criteria in the Historic Preservation Ordinance that requires that a project will be “compatible in character and nature ... with the historical, archaeological, architectural or cultural features of [Kensington]” and other criteria.

The Historic Preservation Ordinance requires that the Historic Preservation Commission review applications in public so that property owners and other interested parties may participate in the process. The Commission generally meets two Wednesday evenings a month to consider applications. The Commission provides notice of the meeting via mail to the applicant, neighbors and interested parties, and publishes the meeting agenda online and in a local newspaper. The Commission also shares applications with the Kensington Local Advisory Panel, a group of Kensington Residents charged with providing input on projects to the Historic Preservation Commission and applicant. All interested parties are welcome to provide testimony either in writing or at the Commission’s public hearing.

The process from application submittal to Historic Preservation Commission approval can take as little as 21 days. More complicated projects – such as those requiring a preliminary consultation with the Historic Preservation Commission – can take longer, but once you have submitted a complete application, the HPC will act on your project within 45 days (and generally closer to 21). There is no fee for a HAWP.

The Historic Preservation Ordinance requires that a HAWP be approved before “constructing, reconstructing, moving, relocating, demolishing or in any manner modifying, changing or altering the exterior” of property within the Kensington Historic District.

### Examples of work that requires a HAWP

- Additions/new construction/decks
- Changing roofing or siding materials
- Cutting down trees greater than 6” dia
- Hardscaping or fences
- Demolishing existing buildings/structures
- Constructing outbuildings

### Examples of work that does not require a HAWP

- Interior work
- Gardening/landscaping
- Painting (except previously unpainted masonry)
- Ordinary maintenance (e.g. patching roof, repairing gutters)

**Note: Ordinary maintenance and rehabilitation work may be eligible for state and county tax credits**

[www.montgomeryplanning.org/historic](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/historic)

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