

## COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### **Q. Is my property a local landmark?**

A. Please contact the Orange Historic Preservation Commission to verify if your property is a local landmark.

### **Q. Will my property taxes be increased due to designation as a historic property?**

A. No. Property assessments will not be affected by this designation.

### **Q. Where can I find a full copy of the Ordinance?**

A. The full ordinance is on file for your review at the Planning Office in the City of Orange Municipal Building at 29 North Day Street, 2nd floor or on this site.

### **Q. Are there any special requirements that I maintain my property?**

A. All property owners in Orange are already required by ordinance to maintain their properties. Owners of landmark properties have a special responsibility to maintain their unique properties, and therefore, the Ordinance has a reinforced provision which prevents them from allowing their properties to deteriorate through neglect. Owners are entitled to a public hearing on matters involving failure to maintain their property, just as they are entitled under other ordinances of the Township.

### **Q. Do I need a permit to perform work on my property?**

A. By law, the Orange Historic Preservation Commission must review any proposals for alterations to local landmark buildings and determine whether they have any effect on the significant features of a building or a historic district. Any effect must be harmonious or appropriate. When in doubt if your work needs approval, please contact the Planning Department staff. Any exterior work that is visible from a public right-of-way that alters or involves a change of existing materials and is not normal upkeep and maintenance (i.e. replacing wood siding with synthetic siding, painting unpainted brick, installing new windows) requires a permit. Demolition and new construction as well as installation of fencing or a wall on the grounds of the property also requires a permit. Permits are required for businesses wishing to put up new signs, even if it is behind the glass in a window, or to install or recover awnings as well as for other more permanent forms of signage and exterior lighting.

### **Q. What is the application procedure?**

A. Applications must comply with local zoning codes. Applications must be filled out, signed by the owner, and submitted with documentation and architectural plans as required:

Three (3) paper copies of the application;

Fifteen (15) paper copies of the documentation and plans; and

One (1) electronic copy of the documentation and plans (CD or via email).

Guidelines for the submission are given in the Application.

A \$100 application fee is due with the application.

An additional, non-refundable escrow fee is due as a separate check made out to the Township of Orange. The escrow fee is based on the application type as follows:

Application Type

Application Fee

Escrow Conceptual Review \$100 \$150

Signage, awnings (new, recovering) \$100 \$150

Facade improvement \$100 \$500

Telecommunications \$100 \$300

Site Plan \$100 \$800

Applications may be turned in at any time of the month and are then reviewed for completeness by the OHPC staff. The applications are subject to a final review by an OHPC Commissioner two weeks prior to the hearing date to assess if the application is complete and hearing-ready.

Additional information may be requested. Once an application is deemed complete, the OHPC staff will contact the applicant and give Notice of the Hearing.

**Q. How does the public hearing work?**

A. Public Hearings before the Orange Township Historic Preservation Commission typically begin at 7:30 pm on the third Wednesday of each month. The meetings are typically held in the Township Council Meeting Room on the fourth floor of the Orange Municipal Building located at 29 North Day Street, Orange. You will be informed of the completeness of your application and the exact time and place of your hearing two weeks prior to the hearing.

An applicant, architect or sign representative's attendance is necessary at the public hearing to represent your application. If you are presenting architectural drawings, you will be asked to mount important drawings (elevations or sections) on boards for the hearing to aid in the discussion.

If you have presented past schemes, those boards must be represented for comparison purposes, so the Commissioners understand what has changed.

At the hearing, OHPC staff may help you present your application to the Commission and then Commissioners will ask direct questions regarding your application. It is often helpful to have a professional on hand to answer questions if you do not fully understand the logistics of installation or construction and the nature of the proposed materials.

The OHPC may decide to approve, deny, or deny without prejudice your application if it is determined that additional information is necessary. Applications that are held over will receive first priority as Old Business at future meetings.

Interim sub-committee meetings with OHPC staff may meet prior to returning with your application before the Commission.

**Q. How long will it take to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness?**

A. A decision will be made as quickly as possible, but within a maximum of 45 days after the completed application has been referred to the Commission, unless a mutually agreed-upon extension is granted.

**Q. After I have obtained a Certificate of Appropriateness, can I begin work on my property?**

A. Yes. The property owner can proceed immediately, provided any and all required permits and certificates have been obtained from the Township of Orange and any conditions of permitting are followed.

**Q. Can I appeal the Commission's decision?**

A. Yes. If a property owner does not agree with the findings of the Commission, she/he may appeal to the Board of Adjustment. Thereafter, the owner can appeal through the courts of New Jersey.

**Q. Are there any penalties for violating provisions of the ordinance?**

A. Yes. Any activity that violates the provisions of the Ordinance must be stopped immediately. The property owner must then apply to the Commission for approval and take any steps necessary to preserve the property while the approval is pending. If a landmark is threatened with imminent harm by the actions of an owner who continues to violate the Ordinance, the Township may apply to the courts to stop the activity. There are also fines which may be levied against owners following their conviction for a violation of the Ordinance.