

SOUTH ORANGE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

2024 HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Is my property designated as historic by South Orange Village?

The only residential properties that are designated historic as of October 2024 are the 40 properties identified as “key contributing properties” in the Montrose Park Historic District. These properties are identified on a designated properties list that can be found on the Village Historic Preservation Commission (“HPC”) website.

2. Can my property be designated historic?

For your property to be designated historic, or more specifically as a local landmark, the HPC must consider whether to recommend its designation. Prior to the HPC making such a recommendation, it must notify you by certified mail of a public hearing in which it will consider that recommendation. You will have the opportunity to appear before the HPC and offer comments, questions or objections prior to the HPC’s recommendation on designation.

If the HPC recommends designation, the Village Council will consider an ordinance making that designation, after referral to the Planning Board for a decision whether such a designation is consistent with the Village Master Plan. You will be notified of the Village Council hearing on the designation ordinance and you will have the opportunity to offer comments, questions or objections to the ordinance.

3. If my property is designated historic, what role does the HPC have in regulating my property?

If your project requires a variance from the Zoning Board of Adjustment (“Board”), then that Board will refer your application to the HPC. The HPC will conduct a hearing at which you or your professionals will describe the project. The HPC will offer its comments on the project and prepare a report for consideration by the Board when it considers your variance application.

If your project does not require approval by the Board, then the HPC will determine if your project is exempt from HPC review and, if it is not exempt, whether it qualifies as “minor work” or “major work” under the HPC ordinance. If the project qualifies as

“minor work,” an HPC subcommittee will determine whether your project is in compliance with the Ordinance and will notify the appropriate Village building officials regarding its decision.

If the project qualifies as “major work,” you will be directed to file an application for a certificate of appropriateness with the HPC. Your application will be scheduled for a hearing before the HPC at which time you or your professionals can describe the project and why a certificate should be issued under the criteria in the ordinance. The Commission will decide whether to issue this certificate and advise the appropriate village building officials regarding its decision. If your application is granted, then the appropriate building or other construction permit may be issued if you satisfy all other criteria for that permit. If your application is denied by the HPC, you may appeal that decision to the zoning board of adjustment.

What kinds of projects at my home will require HPC approval?

All interior renovations are exempt from HPC review. Regarding exterior renovations, the HPC does not regulate a number of projects, such as painting of currently painted portions of the facade, landscaping, and repair of existing doors and windows with in-kind materials, for example.

“Minor work” reviewed by the HPC subcommittee includes work such as roof replacement with material compatible with the historic character or architectural design; replacement of existing doors and windows; and painting of previously unpainted surfaces, like stone.

“Major work” requiring full HPC review includes additions, alterations or replacements of a publicly visible facade of the home except for those projects that qualify as “minor work.”

For more information, please visit the HPC page on the Village’s website or attend one of the HPC’s monthly meetings, currently being held virtually and usually scheduled for the third Thursday of each month.