

EXCERPT FROM  
MERIDIAN CODE OF ORDINANCES SECTION 17, ARTICLE III

**Sec. 17-50. Certificates of Appropriateness [COA] - Approval Required**

- (1) The Commission or the City Council acting upon the advice of the Commission, may approve an application and issue a certificate of appropriateness [COA] if it finds that a proposed construction, alteration, demolition, subdivision or relocation is: consistent with the design review guidelines established by the Commission; would be compatible with the character of a historic district or landmark or landmark site; and does not compromise the historic and architectural integrity of the historic district landmark or landmark site.
- (2) The City Council may require that a property owner post a bond to guarantee satisfactory completion of a relocation project.
- (3) A partial demolition shall be considered an alteration.
- (4) Applications for a COA shall be denied only upon determination by the Commission that the proposed changes would:
  - (a.) Result in such disharmony of scale and/or style between the proposed project and its immediate surroundings and the historic preservation district as a whole as to undermine the architectural integrity and character of the historic preservation district, and inhibit the accomplishment of the purposes of this article; or,
  - (b.) Result in such a change in the architectural design or character of an existing building or improvement as to undermine the architectural design or character of such existing building or improvement, and inhibit the accomplishment of the purposes of this article; or,
  - (c.) Result in the loss or irreparable harm to an existing building or improvement of architectural or historical significance.
  - (d.) In making its evaluation, the Commission shall seek to accomplish the purposes of this article and, in particular, to preserve and protect the architectural and historical integrity and character of the historic preservation district or historic site.
- (5) The Commission shall promulgate and publish such regulations and standards as necessary to inform the public of and to clarify and make certain the criteria by which applications for certificates of appropriateness shall be evaluated.
- (6) The Commission shall not consider interior arrangement, design, or use nor shall it make any requirements affecting such, except as necessary for the attainment of the purposes of this article.
- (7) In cases in which the Commission shall disapprove an application for a COA, the written denial thereof shall include specific reasons for such denial and recommendations allowing qualification.
- (8) The Commission may approve such application in any case where either the owner or the district would suffer extreme hardship, unless the COA was issued forthwith.

**Sec. 17-51. COA- Applicability**

- (1) Except as otherwise allowed under this section, after designation as a historic district, landmark or landmark site, no exterior portion of any building or other structure (including walls, fences, light fixtures, steps and pavement, or other appurtenance features), nor above-ground utility structure, nor any type of outdoor advertising sign shall be erected, altered, restored, moved or demolished until an application for a COA as to exterior features and proposed changes thereto has been submitted to and approved by the Commission. A COA shall be required whether or not a building permit is required. The City does herein require such a certificate to be issued by the Commission prior to the issuance of any building permit or other approval.
- (2) No change in the use of any structure or property within a designated historic district, landmark or landmark site shall be permitted until after an application for a COA has been submitted to and approved by the Commission. The City does herein require such a certificate to be issued by the Commission prior to the approval of any change of zoning classification within the historic district or of the historic landmark or landmark site.
- (3) When small portions of a building or a structure are to be restored, such minor restoration work may be allowed without approval of a COA at the discretion of the building official upon a finding that such restoration will maintain the original historical integrity of the building or structure.
- (4) Interior changes shall not require a COA unless the MHPC Secretary finds such changes to be incongruous with the historical, architectural, archaeological or cultural aspects of the historic district, landmark or landmark site.

- (5) The ordinary maintenance or repair of any structure which does not involve a **change** in design, material, color or outer appearance thereof, and minor restoration work which maintains the original historical integrity of the structure and any change which the building official or similar official shall **certify** is required because of an unsafe or dangerous condition may be allowed without benefit of a COA if approved by the MHPC Secretary.

#### **Sec. 17-52. COA- Criteria for issuance**

The Commission shall adhere to and seek compatibility of structures in the historic district, landmark or landmark site in terms of size, texture, scale, and site plan, and in so doing; the following guidelines shall be considered in passing upon applications for a COA:

- (1) *For new construction:*
  - (a.) All new construction shall be visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which they are related;
  - (b.) The design, scale, gross volume, arrangement, site plan, texture, material and exterior architectural features of new construction shall be in harmony with its surroundings, and shall not impair the "tout ensemble" of the neighborhood;
  - (c.) No single architectural style shall be imposed and diversity is encouraged;
  - (d.) Quality and excellence in design should be major determinants with the primary goal being the creation of future Contributing Resources.
- (2) *For exterior alterations including signage:*
  - (a.) All exterior alterations to a building shall be compatible with the building itself and other buildings with which it is related, as described in subsection (1)(b.) above, and in applying these standards the original design of the building may be considered;
  - (b.) Exterior alterations shall not affect the architectural character or historic quality of the building.
- (3) *For demolition:* In considering an application for demolition within a historic district, landmark or landmark site the following shall be considered:
  - (a.) The historic or architectural significance of the building;
  - (b.) The importance of the building to the "tout ensemble" of the district;
  - (c.) The special character and aesthetic interests that the building adds to the district;
  - (d.) The difficulty or impossibility of reproducing such a building because of its design, texture, material or detail;
  - (e.) The future utilization of the site.

#### **Sec. 17-53. COA-Procedure for issuance**

- (1) Prior to issuance or denial of a COA, the Commission shall take such action as may be reasonably required to inform the owners of any property likely to be materially affected by the application, and shall give the applicant and such owners an opportunity to be heard.
- (2) Anyone desiring to take action within a historic preservation district, landmark or landmark site for which a building or other permit from the City is either required, or **not otherwise required**, shall apply for a COA directly to the Commission by making an application containing:
  - (a.) A description of the subject property and its location within the historic preservation district;
  - (b.) A description of the action sought to be taken;
  - (c.) Explanation of how the action is to be accomplished;
  - (d.) Other information and exhibits as may be required;
  - (e.) And a review fee per the latest adopted fee schedule.
- (3) Whether a building permit is otherwise required or not, after a COA has been issued, the City's Community Development Department shall have the authority to inspect the work in progress to ensure compliance with the plans, specifications and other conditions upon which the COA was issued.
- (4) Any person may appeal from a ruling of the Commission. Such appeal shall be made within thirty (30) days of the date of such ruling, to the City Council. The appellant shall file with the Commission a notice of appeal, specifying the grounds thereof. The chairman of the Commission shall forthwith transmit to the governing authority all papers constituting the record upon which the action appealed from was taken. The final disposition of any such appeal shall be in the form of a decision expressed in a resolution, with reversing, modifying, or affirming, wholly, or partially, the Commission's decision or determination. Any person aggrieved at the findings of the City Council shall have the right of appeal in the manner provided by law as for zoning decisions.

**Case#** \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS  
MERIDIAN HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

Address of Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Name of Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

Representative of Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Application for:  Sign  Building changes  Tax abatement  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Designer name/phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Contractor name/phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated Date of Construction: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE DESCRIBE EXISTING CONDITION OF THE BUILDING(S). Attach photographs of the existing building.** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF WORK TO BE COMTEMPLATED. You may use extra pages for this description. To the degree possible, provide drawings and specifications for all work to be done [materials, colors, textures, locations, etc.]. For signage indicate type, position/s on the building, and size of both proposed signage, and existing signage to remain.**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Owner signature (must match above)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Review fee = \$20.00**

**FOR STAFF USE ONLY - - DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE**

Date Building Constructed:	Year Listed on National Register:	Year Listed as a Mississippi Landmark:	Year Listed as City of Meridian Landmark:	Date Application Received:
Date Application Disapproved:	Date Application Approved:	Certificate of Appropriateness	Number	

Does this application meets the requirements of the following ordinances:

- Sign       Zoning       Curb Cuts       Tree       Preservation
- Building Codes       Fire Codes       Flood Zone

**STAFF COMMENTS**