



TOWN OF THE PLAINS ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Town of The Plains, Virginia

6451 John Marshall Highway, The Plains, Virginia 20198

540-364-4945

theplainstreasurer@gmail.com

The Architectural Review Board (ARB) must receive enough information on which to base its decision. Applicants will need to complete an application provided by the Zoning Administrator. You must provide photographs, drawings and plans or other documentation as required by the ARB. These submissions do not have to be prepared by professionals but must be easy to understand by the board members. The application describes the requirements for each type of submission. There may be additional permits and fees required depending on the request. Zoning permits are required for structures, retaining wall, signs, site plans, and additions. Applicants are expected to be present at the Architectural Review Board meeting to present the request and answer any questions board members may have.

The submission guidelines are derived from The Town of The Plains Zoning Ordinance and The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings, free copies of which are available at the John Marshall Library Marshall Community Center, 4133 Rectortown Road, Marshall, VA 20115.

Project Checklist

Contact information is located on the following pages and above.

1. Refer to the Guidelines for Issuing a Certificate of Appropriateness on the following pages.
2. The Plain's national and local historic districts may allow for federal, state, or local tax abatement and/or loan programs. Check with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to determine which program, if any, would benefit the project.
3. Check The Plains Zoning Ordinance to make sure that your planned use is allowed and what other approvals may be required.
4. Building permits are issued by the Fauquier County Building Department. Once the application is approved by the Architectural Review Board, the Zoning Administrator will issue a zoning permit and the ARB will issue a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for the project. It is recommended that all applicants meet with the Building Official early in the project if you are doing structural renovations.
5. The Virginia Department of Historic Resources has names of contractors who have worked with historic buildings and materials. They can also offer advice on technical preservation issues and methods of construction.
6. Review the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation in this packet. These ten standards **MUST** be followed if using federal or state tax credits. The ARB follows these standards when reviewing applications for Certificates of Appropriateness

**THE PLAINS HISTORIC DISTRICT
GUIDELINES FOR ISSUING A CERTIFICATE OF
APPROPRIATENESS**

The Plains Town Council, at Article 13 of the Zoning Ordinance, created Historic Resource Overlay District (HOD) “...to promote civic pride in the accomplishments of the past, to protect against deterioration, destruction of or encroachment upon such areas, structures, and premises; to encourage uses which will lead to their continuance, conservation, and improvement in an appropriate manner; and to assure that new structures and uses within such districts will be in keeping with the character to be preserved and enhanced.”

From Article 13 of the Plains Zoning Ordinance:

No building or structure, including signs, lights, external electronic devices, fences, benches, windows or shutters shall be erected, reconstructed, restored or substantially altered in exterior appearance within the historic district and no permit authorizing same shall be granted unless and until the same is approved by the Architectural Review Board and a Certificate of Appropriateness has been issued by the Architectural Review Board, with right of direct appeal to the Town Council as hereinafter provided, as being architecturally compatible with the historical, aesthetic, cultural and/or architectural aspects of the landmark. "Substantial alterations" shall be defined as any and all work done on landmarks, buildings or structures in a historic district that change the character of the above mentioned.

Projects that may change the exterior appearance, form, or materials of a building, structure, or site located within any HOD - including but not limited to projects that involve the activities listed above - require a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA).

Each COA application is forwarded to The Plains Architectural Review Board (ARB) for consideration. The ARB reviews each application and makes a decision based upon the zoning ordinance, and *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings*. In accordance with these guidelines, the ARB takes the following types of issues into account for each proposed project.

Consideration will be given to:

1. Significance of architectural design.
2. Scale and/or interrelationships of structures and/or environmental features.
3. Significant patterns of development.
4. Quality of Workmanship.
5. Amount of surviving original fabric.
6. Original location and/or use.
7. Remaining outbuildings or dependencies.
8. Surrounding environment; gardens, landscaping walks.
9. Aesthetic quality.
10. Original integrity of the structure and its details.

Fauquier County will not issue construction permits for projects that require a COA until a COA is approved.

The ARB meets monthly at The Plains Town Hall at 6451 John Marshall Highway, The Plains, VA 20198, on the first Monday of each month at 7:00 PM. A COA application must be submitted at least 14 days prior to the next ARB meeting. **An applicant is not required to attend the ARB meeting; however, it is highly recommended.**

Based on its review of the application, the ARB may:

- approve an application,
- approve an application with conditions that mitigate adverse impacts,
- deny an application, or
- defer an application for up to sixty (60) days if additional information about the project is required.

If the ARB approves an application, it shall issue a COA. If the ARB denies an application, it shall notify the applicant in writing. If an application is denied, the applicant may resubmit a revised application.

Any owner or owners of real property within The Plains, who are aggrieved by a decision of the ARB, may appeal the decision to the Town Council by filing a written petition with the Town Clerk within thirty (30) days of that decision. On any such appeal, the final decision of the Architectural Review Board shall be stayed pending the outcome of the appeal before the Town Council. The Town Council shall conduct a public hearing on the matter before rendering any decision. The same standards shall be applied by the Town Council as are established for the Architectural Review Board. The Town Council may affirm, reverse or modify the decision of the Architectural Review Board. The Town Council decision shall be final, subject to appeal to a Court of record.

Minor Work Not Requiring a COA

Minor work or actions deemed by the Zoning Administrator as not having a permanent effect upon the character of the historic property or district are exempt from full review by the ARB. The Zoning Administrator will review minor work or actions.

General Examples of "non-substantial" alterations

- A. Work done to prevent deterioration or to replace parts of a structure with similar materials in order to correct any deterioration, decay of or damage to any structure or on any part thereof, or
- B. To restore same as nearly as practical to its condition prior to such deterioration, decay or damage.

Certain minor actions that are deemed not to have permanent effects upon the character of the

historic district are exempt from review for architectural compatibility by the Architectural Review Board. Such actions shall include the following:

- A. Replacing of missing or broken windowpanes or windows; replacing roofing slates, tiles or shingles; or the replacement of shutters where no substantial change in design or material is proposed.
- B. Addition or deletion of storm doors or storm windows and window gardens or similar appurtenances.
- C. Addition or deletion of private television and radio antennas or dishes
- D. Addition or deletion of skylights and solar panels in locations not greatly visible from a public street.
- E. Landscaping involving planting of grass, trees or shrubs, and gardens and the construction of walkways, low retaining walls, small fountains, ponds and like features which will not substantially affect the character of the property and its surroundings.
- F. Routine utility repairs and minor improvements which will not be visible from the public right-of way.

In instances where these guidelines discuss or imply compatibility with existing structures, such compatibility should be:

- primarily with contributing structures in National, State, or local historic districts in The Plains; and
- secondarily with existing structures within 300 feet of the proposed site.

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE - No specific architectural style shall be imposed in the administration of the historic district ordinance.

Buildings should be designed as single entities, with the character and design of the primary facade continued on side and rear elevations. Architectural elements from widely different styles should not be mixed on a single building.

Design themes unrelated to the traditions of The Plains area should be avoided. For example, buildings which attempt to look like a Bavarian cottage, Spanish mission, Asian pagoda, Polynesian village, Tudor mansion, waterfront shanty, etc., bear no relationship to the history or architecture of this area.

HEIGHT - It is important along street facades that the height of new buildings, especially those between two contributing structures, conform to the average height of other buildings in the block.

PROPORTION - New construction should relate to the dominant proportions of buildings in the immediate area. Overall proportion - the total ratio of height to width - is the most important consideration. Also important is the overall ratio of solid space to void - that is: the mass of the walls and the places where this mass has been broken up by openings for windows and doors.

SCALE - Scale is determined by several factors including cornice or eave height, the elevation of the first floor, floor-to-floor heights, and the proportions determined by the size and arrangement of door and window openings and porch column spacing. The scale and mass of a proposed project should relate to nearby buildings or open space surrounding it.

OPENINGS - New construction should take into account the ratio of solid to void. The pattern and overall proportion of openings should relate to other buildings in the district. Large expanses of blank walls facing a street are generally not compatible with The Plains area.

ORIENTATION - The orientation and setback of the main facades of new construction should respect the precedent set by existing buildings in the surrounding district. Commercial and office structures should direct their primary orientation and entrance to the major adjacent public right-of-way from which traffic arrives to the structure.

ENTRANCES - The spacing and proportion of entrances and porches along the street help determine the rhythm of the streetscape. New construction of entrances should continue, not disrupt, this existing rhythm. Building entrances should be clearly defined, and pedestrian walkways clearly associated with the entrance.

RHYTHM - Rhythm is the repetition of architectural elements such as doors, windows, porches, and cornice decorations. A building or project should continue, not disrupt, the architectural rhythm already established in the district.

SPACING - The spacing between buildings helps determine the rhythm of the streetscape. New construction should be spaced to continue the existing spacing pattern of the surrounding area.

MATERIALS - In order not to disrupt the visual quality of the neighborhood, an effort shall be made to use traditional materials that are predominantly used in the area. Use of inappropriate materials, including reflective glass, metal wall panels, plastic, fiberglass stone, or fiberglass brick, should be avoided.

TEXTURE - The texture of materials used in new construction should conform to existing texture patterns such as brick, stucco, horizontal or vertical wood siding, rough rock, or smooth sand. Introducing non-traditional textures is discouraged.

COLOR - The predominant colors of any unpainted materials proposed should resemble predominant tones in the district. Paint color shall be considered as part of these guidelines, the use of trim colors to accent architectural details is encouraged.

DETAILS - Architectural details are very important in maintaining the character of a district; new construction should employ some of the details typical of the district. These may include: cornice design, window trim, chimney shapes, shutters, door paneling, porches, railing and fence designs. Architectural details should be continued on any side or rear building facade which is visible from a public right-of-way. Any facade which presents a blank wall must be acceptably screened. Small attachments to buildings (such as meters, telephone, and cable connections) should be placed so as not to detract from the overall project. Large attachments (such as air conditioning units, fuel tanks, antennas and satellite dishes) should either be screened or placed out of view from any public right-of-way.

ROOFS - Roof shape, pitch, and material on new projects should be similar to existing roofs in the district.

WALLS AND FENCES - These items can add visual cohesiveness to a project. Use of traditional materials such as wood, stone, brick, iron, or evergreens is encouraged. Chain link fences, including those with slats, are discouraged, particularly when visible from a public right-of-way.

SIGNS - Please refer to the Sign Regulations of the Town of The Plains Zoning Ordinance. The size and height of signs should reflect the slower automobile speeds and pedestrian scale of the district. Projecting and other wall-mounted signs are encouraged in the downtown commercial area. Monument signs are encouraged, rather than pole-mounted signs. Signs should reflect the buildings to which they refer and be part of an overall landscape plan. Internally lit signs are not appropriate where they would refer to, or be placed on, buildings.

OFF-STREET PARKING Large expanses of off-street parking should be avoided. Parking areas should be divided into smaller units through landscaping or building location. Walkways should be delineated by the use of special paving materials.

BUILDING ARRANGEMENT - When several structures are planned on a single site, structures should complement one another, and reflect an overall plan for the appearance of the property. Commercial and office development should cluster buildings into organized groups.

<p style="text-align: center;">THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES</p>
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The guidelines in this application are based on *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings*. They express a basic rehabilitation credo of "retain, repair, and replace." In other words, do not remove a historic element, do not replace an element if it can be repaired, and replace an element that has been removed or cannot be repaired.

First developed in 1979, and updated on occasion, these guidelines have been continually expanded and refined. They are used by the National Park Service to determine if the rehabilitation of a historic building has been undertaken in a manner that is sensitive to its historic integrity. The guidelines are very broad by nature since they apply to the rehabilitation of any contributing building in any historic district throughout the United States. Guidelines should be referenced from *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings*. From the Standards for Preservation:

CONTACT INFORMATION & RESOURCES
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Architectural Review Board

6451 John Marshall Highway
The Plains, VA 20198 Phone: (540) 364-4945
Fax: (540) 364-4945

The ARB meets monthly at The Plains Town Hall at 6451 John Marshall Highway, The Plains, VA 20198, on the first Monday of each month at 7:00 PM.

ARB Members:

Member	Term Expires
Riley Berg, Chair	July 2026
Georgia Herbert	July 2025
Shoshana Datlow	July 2026
Michael Benjamin	July 2025
Robert E. Hale	July 2027

County of Fauquier Building Department

<https://www.fauquiercounty.gov/government/departments-a-g/community-development/building-permitting-inspections?locale=en>

Fauquier County Historical Association

<https://www.fauquierhistory.org/>

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

<https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/>

National Trust for Historic Preservation

<https://savingplaces.org/>



TOWN OF THE PLAINS

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 The Plains, Virginia 20198
 (540) 364-4945

www.theplainsvirginia.org | theplainstreasurer@gmail.com

Application No.

**Architectural Review Board (ARB)
 or Sign Application for
 Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)**

ARB review and approval is required prior to exterior changes to any properties within the Historic Overlay District (which includes any property within the Town limits). Those changes are subject to Article 13 of the Zoning Ordinance. This form is used to request a Sign Permit or for changes to building/property exteriors, both of which require a Certificate of Appropriateness. By signing below, you acknowledge that all information provided on this application is accurate and complete.

Please complete the applicable sections below and submit all supporting documentation electronically to Town Hall, in person, or by email to theplainstreasurer@gmail.com. Please be sure to mark the relevant ARB activity.

SECTION 1: Applicant/Contractor and Owner Information				<input type="checkbox"/> Applicant same as Owner	
Applicant/Contractor Name:			Phone:		
Applicant/Contractor Mailing Address:			E-mail:		
Owner Name:			Phone:		
Owner Mailing Address:			E-mail:		
Applicant Signature:			Date:		
Owner Signature:			Date:		
SECTION 2: Activity / Site Information (check all that apply)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Sign Permit	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping	<input type="checkbox"/> Addition		
<input type="checkbox"/> Alteration/Repair	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition	<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:		
Site Address:				Zoning District:	
GPIN:		Gateway District:		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Year Structure was Built:					
Additional Comments/Description (attach additional sheets if needed):					

Please include a copy of the following information for each sign requested:

Scale color illustration of the sign, indicating the material, dimensions (including square footage), the location of the sign (including minimum 8'-6" above all sidewalks or rights-of-way for projecting signs), type of sign (freestanding, hanging, wall, etc.) and method of mounting.

Color chips if applicable

Illustration and details of the proposed illumination, if any

Sign Company/Telephone

Any additional information deemed necessary by staff/Zoning Administrator.

Submittals for ARB review:

Drawings - six (6) scale copies of elevations of proposed structures or modifications.

Site Plan - six (6) scale copies of site modifications including building footprints, fence locations, and walkway locations.

Material/ color samples or illustrations as applicable including but not limited to cut sheets of new windows, doors, roof materials (shingles, standing seam metal, etc.), and outdoor lighting fixtures.

Photographs of existing structure (if applicable) and site conditions.

For a demolition project, please submit photographs depicting all elevations of the building proposed for demolition, any post-demolition plans for the site, and, if applicable, any information on new construction proposed for the site.

Any additional information deemed necessary by staff/Zoning Administrator.



CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

The Plains Architectural Review Board

Date:		COA Application:	
Applicant/Contractor Mailing Address:		Project Name	
Owner Name:		Phone:	
Owner Mailing Address:		E-mail:	
Site Address:		GPIN:	
Zoning District:		REZ/SUP #:	
Description of Request as Submitted with Supporting Documents (Sketch, Plat, Parking Tabulation, Reason for Modification Request, Historical Documentation of Nonconforming Use/Structure, etc.)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Disapproved <input type="checkbox"/> Approved with Conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Deferred			
Issue Date:		Chairman/Secretary of Architectural Review Board Signature	
Legal Approval Date:		Town Attorney Signature (if applicable)	
Comments/ Conditions:			