



SAN FRANCISCO
PLANNING
DEPARTMENT

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The Architectural Review Committee of the Historic Preservation Commission

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Relevant Topic(s):

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION
COMMISSION**

The purpose of the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) is to provide early direction, comments and advice on projects submitted for review by the HPC early in the design process, in order to provide productive and useful feedback to the owner and architect.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

This summary is designed to clarify for project sponsors and the general public the role of the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) of the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). The ARC is a three-member subcommittee of the HPC, including the Commission President, who serves as an ex-officio member of the ARC. One member of the ARC serves as Chairperson of the Committee.

The purpose of the ARC is to provide early direction, comments and advice on projects submitted for review by the HPC early in the design process, in order to provide productive and useful feedback to the owner and architect. The ARC also provides advice on design, building materials, and construction techniques to the full Commission. The intent is to help project sponsors resolve issues and develop projects that will comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (Standards), the adopted review standards of the HPC. For properties located in historic districts, additional standards for review may also apply. By working with the ARC early in the design process, costly revisions and delays may be avoided. For projects that will be reviewed by the ARC, schematic drawings, rather than fully developed design drawings, will be accepted.

Please note that the ARC does not represent the entire Commission. While every effort is made to provide design direction that will result in a project that will be accepted by the full Commission, the ARC's comments and direction cannot be considered binding.

For advice regarding procedures as well as design prior to submitting an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, project sponsors may contact preservation staff at the Planning Information Center counter (PIC) located on the first floor at 1660 Mission Street, or may call (415)558-6377. Applicants may also request a project review meeting with preservation staff by calling (415)558-6378; a fee is charged for this review.

WHICH PROJECTS SHOULD BE REVIEWED BY THE ARC?

Projects for which applications for Certificates of Appropriateness (C of A) and Permits to Alter involving alteration and new construction have been submitted and have the potential to substantially impact a historic resource should be reviewed by the ARC. Items may be scheduled before the ARC upon the request of any applicant for a C of A or upon joint decision by the Commission President and Commission Secretary. Projects that are small or have relatively little impact on a historic resource generally do not need to be reviewed by the ARC. The following are examples of projects that should be reviewed by the ARC:

- Alterations that may have a significant effect on a facade visible from the street or other public-right-of-way.
- Substantial expansion of a historic building.
- A change to a historic resource that is significant for cultural reasons or for its association with a historic person or event, when such change might result in loss of integrity of character-defining features that are specifically associated with the person or event or are culturally significant.
- New construction in a historic district.

ARC meetings are held at the beginning of the HPC meetings on the first and third Wednesday of every month at 12:30 p.m. in City Hall, Room 400, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place.

ARC MEETINGS

ARC meetings are held at the beginning of the HPC meetings. The HPC meets the first and third Wednesday of every month at 12:30 p.m. in City Hall, Room 400, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place. The ARC meeting format is similar to that used for public hearings (as described in Preservation Bulletin No. 01-Jurisdiction and Procedures of the Historic Preservation Commission.) Typically, the ARC allocates 20 minutes for consideration of each case. The meeting procedure is as follows:

- Department staff will make a brief presentation (3 to 5 minutes), identifying issues that should be considered by the ARC.
- The project sponsor will then make a brief presentation (3 to 5 minutes), describing the project and design considerations that influence the project.
- The ARC will then discuss the project, and consider whether the proposal is generally consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and, for projects located in historic districts, any applicable standards for review as described in Articles 10 and 11 of the Planning Code
- At the end of the meeting, the ARC Chairperson will summarize the issues that were identified, the position of the committee members, and list all recommendations for revisions. The summary should indicate items for which there was a consensus, as well as issues that were of concern to only some of the members.

ACTIONS FOLLOWING AN ARC MEETING

Within two weeks after the ARC meeting, staff will prepare a summary of ARC comments and transmit the comments to the project sponsor. The summary will cite all pertinent Standards.

The project sponsor may then make all necessary revisions, and submit revised drawings to staff. A written response to the ARC summary must be submitted. The written response should describe any changes that have been made to address the concerns of the ARC. If changes have not been made, the project sponsor should provide an explanation.

Upon receipt of revised project materials, the project will be reviewed by staff and scheduled for hearing by the HPC. (See Preservation Bulletin No. 01, *Jurisdiction and Procedures of the Historic Preservation Commission*, No. 02, *Review process for Exterior Alteration and Demolition of Historic Structures*, and No. 04, *Certificate of Appropriateness Procedures*.) The project sponsor's written response to the comments of the ARC will be forwarded to the HPC as an attachment to staff's case report. At the hearing for the C of A, the ARC Chairperson will make a report to the HPC on the recommendation of the ARC.



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FOR MORE INFORMATION:
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*Planning staff are available by phone and at the PIC counter.
No appointment is necessary.*