

Historic Design Standards

What does it mean for me?

In 1994 the Springboro community began work on a comprehensive master plan for the future of this rapidly growing city. The one issue that surfaced as the most important to the most people was the preservation of the historic charm of our community. This began the effort to identify local historic landmarks and historic districts and establish a process to preserve and protect them.

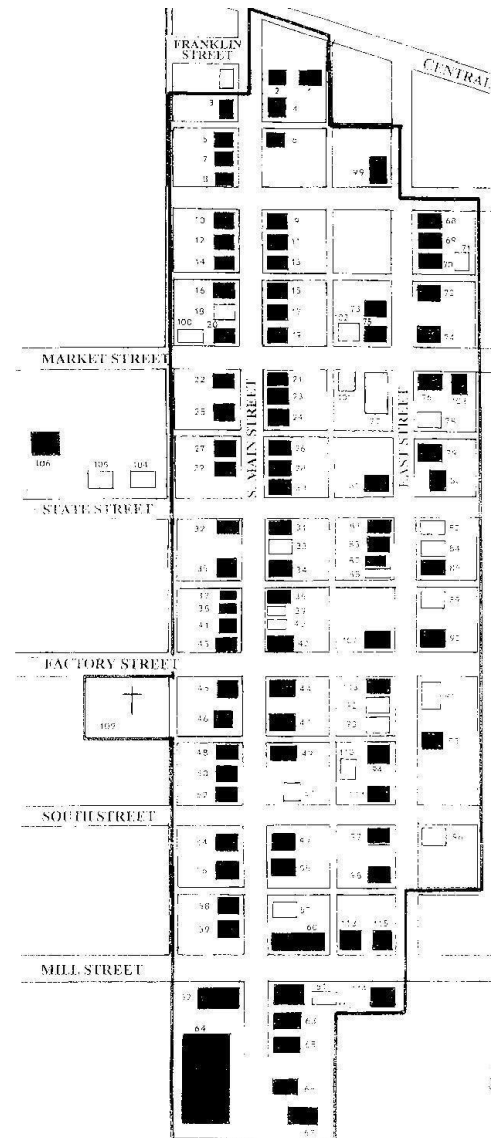
Today, after months and months of intense work by countless volunteers, the City has formally established a downtown historic district, appointed an Architectural Review Board (ARB) to review any proposed changes to buildings within the district, and adopted guidelines for the board to follow in its review.

The Downtown Historic Preservation District

Named to the National Register of Historic Places by the U.S. Department of the Interior, a collection of over 112 buildings in the heart of Springboro offers a classic example of an early 19th Century town that the residents of 21st Century Springboro seek to preserve.

Planning to make a change to the outside of your building? Here's what to do ...

- Call the Municipal Building (937) 748-4343 to get an application for a permit called a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). An application can also be found on the City of Springboro's website at www.ci.springboro.oh.us.
- After you fill out the COA application, the ARB will review your proposal at its next meeting on the second Monday of each month.
- Once approved, a COA will be issued. The Building Department will issue a building permit if one is needed following the COA review process.



Springboro Historic Preservation District

Questions and Answers About Design Standards

- Q. Why do we have Design Standards?** As the city's Architectural Review Board (ARB) reviews each request for alterations to the exterior outside of historic buildings, it needs to have guidelines so that its decisions are as fair and consistent. Also, residents in the historic district should be able to know what the ARB will expect before they begin the process of project review.
- Q. How much does an ARB review cost?** The review process is free. If your project requires a building permit in addition to the ARB review, the City will charge only for the building permit as it would for similar projects elsewhere in town.
- Q. Do I need to request a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) before I paint my house?** Yes. Even though some other historic districts in other cities have developed a list of approved paint colors, the Springboro ARB has not done so. Your local ARB wants only to discourage inappropriate colors that would detract from the value of the district.
- Q. What about a sign for my business or a new roof for my building?** Yes, these too require a COA, as do fences and repairs to existing structures. The City's ordinance says that "any alteration, restoration, new exterior construction, demolition, removal, protection, or preservation work...not including landscaping" must be done with a COA.
- Q. Must I request a COA for interior work in my building?** No. Only work "visibly affecting the exterior of a building or the grounds of a protected property..." requires a COA.
- Q. Where can I get more information about the proper preservation of my building?** The ARB has assembled a collection of materials on a range of topics for your use that is housed at the Springboro Public Library. Library staff can assist you in finding the information you need. Contact the City at 748-4343 for a list of materials in the collection.
- Q. Whom may I call to ask questions about the Design Standards, the COA process, the ARB or historic preservation in general?** Please feel free to contact the City of Springboro at 748-4343.

Some Do's and Don'ts:

Do apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) if you wish to ...

- Change anything on the exterior of your building
- Paint your building
- Demolish or remove anything from the exterior of your building

Don't apply for a COA if...

- You are doing only interior work in your building
- You are doing landscaping

Do request a COA if your home or building is a "contributing structure," i.e., a historically significant building, within the Downtown Historic Preservation District. (Consult the historic district map to determine if your home or building is a contributing building.)

Do seek a COA if your home has been designated as an official City Landmark, apart from the Downtown District.

Don't seek a COA for any work to a "noncontributing structure" in the Downtown Historic Preservation District. (consult the historic district map to determine if your home or building is a noncontributing building).