

KING COUNTY LANDMARK DESIGNATION AND CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS PROCESS

Technical Paper No. 4



King County

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Nomination

Anyone may nominate a building, site, object, structure, or district for consideration as a King County Landmark. A standard registration form must be completed and filed with the Historic Preservation Officer. Submitted forms are reviewed by the Historic Preservation Officer for completeness prior to being forwarded to the King County Landmarks Commission (Commission) for consideration. The following steps are followed to complete the nomination process:

- Applicant files the registration form with the Historic Preservation Officer, who reviews the form for completeness and requests additional information as needed.
- The Historic Preservation Officer schedules a public hearing before the Commission to consider the nomination. The applicant, the owner, and any parties of interest are notified in writing of the meeting date at least 30 days and not more than 45 days before the meeting.

Designation

At the public hearing, the Commission receives evidence and hears arguments as to whether or not the nominated property meets the criteria for designation.

In order to be designated, a nominated building, site, structure, object, or district must:

- Be more than 40 years old
- Possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association; and,

Meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of national, state, or local history; or
- Be associated with the life of a person or persons significant in national, state, or local history; or
- Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, style or method of design or construction, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- Be an outstanding work of a designer or builder who has made a substantial contribution to the art; or
- Yield or be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history

If the Commission determines that the property meets the designation criteria, it identifies what elements of the property will be subject to design review. These elements, called “features of significance,” typically include the exterior of the property only if it is a building, and the parcel on which it is sited. If significant historic interior features are present, interior spaces may also be designated as features of significance.

If a property is designated, the design controls go into effect immediately, and the property owner becomes eligible to apply for incentive programs. If the determination is negative, the proceedings are terminated.

A designation report is issued approving or rejecting the nomination within 14 calendar days of the public meeting at which the decision is made. The designation report is filed with the County Recorder, property owner, Department of Permitting and Environmental Review (DPER) Director, applicant, and all other parties of record.

Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)

Once a property has been designated a King County Landmark, it is subject to specific design review procedures and preservation standards any time the owner considers making significant alterations to the features of significance or wishes to move or demolish the building. The design review process is as follows:

- An application for a Certificate of Appropriateness is filed with the Historic Preservation Officer in accordance with Commission rules and regulations.
- A consultation meeting is held between the applicant, the Historic Preservation Officer and members of the Design Review Committee (DRC), a subcommittee of the King County Landmarks Commission.
- If all parties agree to an approval recommendation, the application is brought before the Commission for approval action at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
- If the parties are in disagreement, a public hearing is scheduled before the Commission within 45 days of referral of the application to the DRC.
- Notice of the public hearing is mailed to all interested parties at least ten days prior to the date of the public hearing.
- The public hearing is held. If the Commission declines to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness, a written report fully clarifying the basis for the decision is forwarded to all interested parties.

The nomination, designation, and design review processes and appeal procedures are described in detail in King County Code 20.62

(http://www.kingcounty.gov/council/legislation/kc_code.aspx). All Landmarks Commission decisions may be appealed to the King County Council within 30 days of notice of the decision.