

# Technical Guides for Exterior Alterations



A Practical Series for the Preservation and Maintenance of Rockville's Historic Resources

## 11: Relocation or Demolition

### Background

The relocation, or demolition, of historic structures within the historic districts sometimes is proposed. However, the loss of structures important to local history is a loss of value to the entire community. Such proposals shall be undertaken only when the broadest public interest is affected, as occurs, for example, with the construction of a new road or school. As an alternative, and to encourage preservation efforts and offset costs involved with the rehabilitation of historic structures, tax incentive options have been developed at the federal, state, and local levels.

In the City of Rockville, if a demolition permit is submitted for a structure that is approximately 50 years or older, the structure will first be evaluated for historic or cultural significance. If it is found to have significance, the HDC may suggest historic designation and rehabilitation and reuse of the structure. Tax credits would then become available for such work.

### HDC Policy

The relocation or demolition of historic properties within the historic districts is discouraged and shall be considered only as a last resort. If acceptable alternatives are not possible, the following shall be met:

#### Relocation

- Every attempt shall be made to relocate to a similar setting within the local historic district (if multi-site) without damaging the established character of the new location.
- Competent, referenced and bonded companies shall be secured for the move.
- Before relocation, the historic structure and its environmental setting (including topography and landscaping) shall be properly researched, inventoried, mapped and photographed. The entire documentation package shall be prepared by the applicant in consultation with staff, and subject to HDC approval for completeness.

#### Demolition

- The significance of the structure, gardens, landscaping and outbuildings, if any, and its contribution to the district shall be assessed and recorded on a site inventory form to Maryland Historical Trust standards. This shall be supplied by the applicant in consultation with staff and subject to HDC approval for completeness. A photographic record that includes scale shall be made as part of the site inventory work. Significant architectural features or items of historical importance shall be identified.
- Public interest for structural preservation shall be sought and considered. Salvage options, whether through the City or other appropriate groups with interest in local history, shall be proposed as part of the demolition proposal.
- Circumstances and condition of the structure shall be evaluated. A qualified engineer's opinion on the structural integrity of the building shall be obtained, together with an estimate of needed stabilization and necessary code compliance work to be performed.
- The physical and economic feasibility is part of the decision to approve a demolition. Using comparable rehabilitated structure values, and income if applicable, rehabilitation cost vs. new redevelopment cost shall be provided for HDC consideration. Efforts shall be made to develop and offer alternative plans, including financing help through low-cost loans and other incentives to attract interested users and project developers.
- The Commission has 90 days to find acceptable alternatives to the demolition, if it feels that it is physically and economically feasible.

### Certificate of Approval

**PLEASE NOTE - If repair or replacement materials match the existing materials *exactly*, no Certificate of Approval is required.**

If changes are requested, the application for a Certificate of Approval must include the following:

- Justification for request, with required information (described above)

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## 11: Relocation or Demolition *(continued)*

### **Certificate of Approval** *(continued)*

- Structural and economic analysis, including reuse alternatives and use of tax incentives
- Site plan and preferred alternatives, if requesting relocation
- Description of grading and other land disturbance to determine extent of damage to archaeological resources at impacted locations

### **Tax Credit Information**

Tax credits generally do not apply. To maintain eligibility, please have before and after photographs of the work. Obtain HDC approval prior to undertaking the work if a COA is required, and make sure you follow all zoning requirements. Work done without a required HDC Certificate of Approval is not eligible for the tax credits. Forms are available on the City Web site or at the CPDS information desk.

### **Contact Us**

For additional information and questions, please contact:  
Historic District Commission  
Department of Community Planning and  
Development Services

Rockville City Hall  
111 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, MD 20850  
240-314-8230 voice  
240-314-8210 fax  
history@rockvillemd.gov

### **Additional information**

*Adopted Architectural Design Guidelines for the Exterior Rehabilitation of Buildings in Rockville's Historic Districts*, September 1977, Rockville Historic District Commission, pp. 3-18, 63-64, 74.

Secretary of the Interior's *Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation*, (1995), National Park Service (NPS), U.S. Department of Interior, [www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/standguide](http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/standguide).

For other information on the maintenance and rehabilitation of older homes, see [www.cr.nps.gov/architecture/htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/architecture/htm).

*Moving Historic Buildings*, by John Obed Curtis, 1979. Available from the National Park Service.

For suppliers and product information, see [www.oldhouseweb.net](http://www.oldhouseweb.net).