

## [Raze application report - January 30, 2023](#)

Discussion published by Bruce Yarnall on Thursday, February 2, 2023

**Greetings:** This report is also posted on our [website](#) . See Raze Permit Report - January 30, 2023.

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The following raze applications were recently filed at the Department of Buildings (DOB), formerly Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA):

ANC Address

2E 1700 36<sup>th</sup> Street NW - raze two-story, end-unit rowhouse and accessory garage

3F 5229 Nebraska Avenue NW - raze one-story accessory garage

3/4G 5505 33<sup>rd</sup> Street NW - raze one-story accessory garage

4E 5720 Georgia Avenue NW - raze one-story retail commercial structure

7C 900 55<sup>th</sup> Street NE - raze split-level single family dwelling

7C 914 55<sup>th</sup> Street NE - raze one-story single family dwelling

### Historic Preservation Clearance of Raze Permit Applications

All raze permit applications in the District of Columbia are submitted to the Historic Preservation Office (HPO) for clearance. The Department of Buildings (DOB) gives applicants a blank clearance letter to submit to HPO for this purpose.

### Why does HPO review all raze permit applications?

HPO clearance of raze applications safeguards against demolition of historic properties by accident or without proper public notice. HPO also ensures that raze applications subject to review under the DC historic preservation law are processed appropriately.

Why is public notice of raze applications important?

District law requires public notice of raze permit applications for both historic and non-historic property. This is because building demolition is often a matter of interest to affected residents and communities. In addition, the DC historic preservation law allows community groups to seek temporary and permanent protection for any property that may meet the criteria for historic landmark designation.

What is the public notice requirement?

Two types of public notice are required for raze applications before a permit is issued:

- The DC Building Code requires the permit applicant to post and maintain a notice of the application on the property for 30 days (12A DCMR § 105.7.1).
- The Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) Act requires DOB to give ANCs a notice of 30 working days, which is usually about 45 days (D.C. Official Code § 1-309.10(c)). DCRA sends this notice by email.

The public notice of raze permit applications establishes a review period during which communities may seek information and consider historic preservation concerns about a property proposed for demolition.

How can I determine when the public review period ends?

HPO posts a list of pending raze permit applications on the Office of Planning website . This posting includes the public review period expires 30 working days after the date of the DOB notice to ANCs.

How long does the HPO review take?

HPO reviews raze applications promptly and in accordance with public notice requirements. The procedures and timing are different for historic and non-historic property.

For non-historic property, HPO typically holds applications for the length of the required ANC notice period. HPO may also request photographs to confirm posting of the notice placard on the property. If an application clearly raises no historic preservation concerns, HPO may use

its discretion to sign off on the application before the notice period expires.

For historic property, HPO reviews the application according to the procedures required in the DC historic preservation law. The law discourages demolition of historic landmarks and properties contributing to the character of historic districts. Typically, an application to raze a historic property must be referred to the Historic Preservation Review Board for a recommendation, and to the Mayor's Agent for a public hearing.

What if applications to raze and designate a property as historic are on file at the same time?

The DC historic preservation law allows ANCs and community groups with a demonstrated interest in historic preservation to file applications for historic designation at any time. Once an application to designate a historic landmark is filed with HPO, the property is protected by law for 90 days to allow HPRB time to determine whether the property meets historic landmark designation criteria. This protection does not apply to properties covered by historic district applications.

During this 90-day temporary protection period, the District may not issue the raze permit for the property. If HPRB determines after a public hearing that the property meets the designation criteria, it becomes a historic landmark and receives permanent protection under the preservation law. If HPRB determines that the property does not meet the criteria, HPO completes the preservation review by clearing the raze application.

How does HPO clear raze applications?

HPO clears the raze application by signing the DOB clearance letter attached to the application. The clearance means either the property is not subject to the preservation law, or the demolition has been authorized under the preservation law.

HPO notifies the raze permit applicant once the HPO clearance letter is signed. Cleared applications are sent to applicants via email or USPS if the applicant provides a stamped return envelope.

For More Information

Contact HPO by telephone at (202) 442-7600, or by email at [historic.preservation@dc.gov](mailto:historic.preservation@dc.gov)

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**Alternative Work Schedule:** *I am out of the office every other Monday, generally the second and fourth Mondays of the month.*

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