

## Obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness

If you live in a home listed on the Cobb County Register of Historic Places (CCRHP) or in a home within the boundaries of one of the two locally designated historic districts (the Concord Covered Bridge District or the Clarkdale Mill Village Historic District) you must obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to make changes to your property. Here are some frequently asked questions about historic resources and COA's.

### **WHAT IS A LOCALLY DESIGNATED**

#### **HISTORIC STRUCTURE OR DISTRICT?**

A locally designated historic structure or district is recognized by its local government as a valuable local historic resource. In unincorporated Cobb County, locally designated properties are listed on the Cobb County Register of Historic Places (CCRHP).

### **HOW DID MY PROPERTY END UP AS**

**"HISTORIC?"** At some point in the past, you, a former owner, or your neighborhood (if you are in a district), with aid from Cobb County staff, applied to be listed on the CCHRP. The Cobb County Board of Commissioners accepted this application and your property was added to the CCHRP.

### **EXACTLY WHAT KIND OF REGULATIONS ARE IN PLACE IN MY COMMUNITY?**

Your structure's additional regulations are much like subdivision covenants and outline acceptable

changes to properties within the district. Unless you are located within the Historic Clarkdale Mill Village (which has specific design guidelines), you follow the criteria outlined in Cobb County Code Section 66-81-96.

### **WHAT KIND OF CHANGES REQUIRE**

**APPROVAL?** Projects involving "material changes" require approval.

### **WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF MATERIAL**

**CHANGES?** Roof, foundation, siding, porch, window, entrance/door, architectural detail, sidewalk, driveway and fence/wall changes or additions are considered material changes. Routine maintenance (pressure washing, etc.) does not require special action.

### **WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE FOR GETTING**

**APPROVAL?** A Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is required for any material change.

### **WHO GRANTS THIS COA?**

The Cobb County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) decides if projects follow established guidelines in one of their monthly meetings.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON'T LIKE THE HPC'S DECISION?**

An appeal process is available for rejected applications. This process is utilized when the application was not granted though the project did indeed meet design criteria.

### **HOW IS BEING LISTED ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES (NRHP) DIFFERENT FROM BEING ON THE CCRHP?**

Being listed on the NRHP, though required for certain federal tax benefits, is chiefly a recognition program and does not offer design guidelines on its properties. Residents of CCRHP-listed properties, however, have chosen to be regulated by additional guidelines

to keep their community's historic character intact

**WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF LIVING IN A  
LOCALLY DESIGNATED HISTORIC**

**DISTRICT?** In addition to property values generally increasing due to upkeep of the community's sense of place, Cobb County also offers a special tax abatement program for residents of National Register-listed and locally designated historic districts or sites.

**HOW DOES THIS TAX PROGRAM WORK?**

Generally speaking, county property taxes are frozen at the current value for ten years for qualifying residents. For more information, contact the county's Historic Preservation Planner.

*Please see the next page for the specific COA process.*

