

Avon Hill Neighborhood Conservation District

The Avon Hill NCD

The Avon Hill Neighborhood Conservation District contains approximately 220 properties in an area bounded by Linnaean Street, Raymond Street, Upland Road, and the zoning boundary of the BA-2 and C-2 zones along Massachusetts Avenue. The review authority of the district is structured as follows.

A. Binding Determinations

The determinations of the Commission shall be binding regarding alterations of Exterior Architectural Features of properties in the Avon Hill National Register District.

The determinations of the Commission shall also be binding for changes within the District but outside the Avon Hill National Register District with regard to applications:

1. to construct a new building, as defined in the zoning ordinance then in effect;
2. to construct an accessory building, as defined in the zoning ordinance then in effect, unless said accessory building does not exceed 15 feet in height, does not exceed 500 square feet in the A-2 zone or more than 300 square feet in the B or C-1 zones, is at least as distant from the main Structure as is required by applicable zoning regulations, and is not located between the street and the façade containing the principal entrance;

3. to construct a parking lot as a principal use;
4. to construct an addition to an existing Structure that would increase its gross floor area by more than 500 square feet in the A-2 zone or more than 300 square feet in the B or C-1 zones;
5. to construct an addition to an existing Structure that would increase the Total Lot Coverage on the property to 35% or more in the A-2 zone or to 45% or more in the B or C-1 zones;
6. to construct an addition on the façade of a Structure containing the principal entrance;
7. to demolish an existing Structure not originally used to garage automobiles that has a footprint that exceeds 150 square feet;
8. to install vinyl or aluminum siding, where it does not already exist, or to install vinyl, vinyl-clad, aluminum, or aluminum-clad windows (other than storm windows), where they do not already exist;
9. to alter, add or remove protruding bays, covered porches, or decks over 2.5 feet above grade;
10. to alter, above the existing eave line, the height or shape of the roof of the principal Structure on the lot. Dormers will be reviewed with consideration to the guideline in Section V, C.7.d of this District Order that encourages conformance with the Design Guidelines for Roof Dormers (1996) prepared for the Board of Zoning Appeal and compatibility with the style, materials, and fenestration of the Structure.

11. to alter the footprint or volume of the façade with the principal entrance to the Structure or, for Structures containing more than one dwelling unit, the facade or facades with the principal entrance or entrances to the dwelling units.

B. Non-binding Determinations

All applications other than those listed in Section IV, A. or C. of this order shall be subject to administrative review by the Staff. The Staff's recommendations in these cases shall be advisory only and not binding on the applicant.

C. Exemptions

The authority of the Commission shall not extend to the following categories of Structures or Exterior Architectural Features. Such Structures or Exterior Architectural Features may be constructed or altered without review by the Commission.

1. The alteration of Exterior Architectural Features on the premises of a property in the District in a manner that does not increase or diminish the existing building envelope and that does not require the removal, enclosure, or addition of any cornice, fascia, soffit, bay, porch, hood, cornerboard, window sash, window or door casing, or any other decorative element, including historic shingled siding, wood or copper gutters and downspouts, or copper, slate or wood shingle roofing, and that does not alter the shape of a roof.

2. For properties not listed in the Avon Hill National Register District, the construction of terraces, walks, driveways, sidewalks, and similar Structures that do not involve a change in grade level and that are not to be used for parking between the principal front wall plane of a building, or principal front and side wall planes of a building that occupies a corner property, and the street.
3. For properties not listed in the Avon Hill National Register District, the construction of walls and fences less than four feet high as measured from the sidewalk or existing immediately adjacent grade and located between the principal front wall plane of a building, or the principal front and side walls of a building that occupies a corner property, and the street. Walls and fences less than six feet high elsewhere on a property shall not be subject to review.
4. Signs, temporary Structures, lawn statuary, or recreational equipment, subject to such conditions as to duration of use, dimension, location, lighting, removal and similar matters as the Commission may reasonably specify.
5. Storm doors and storm windows, screens, and window air conditioners.

For more information, visit
www.cambridgema.gov/historic or contact:

Cambridge Historical Commission
 831 Massachusetts Avenue Cambridge, MA 02139
histncds@cambridgema.gov
 P 617-349-4687 / F 617-349-3116

