



Design Review Requirements for Paint Color Changes

Background: In 1973 the City added design review regulations to the Zoning Ordinance and these regulations generally applied to all buildings within the City except for some single family dwellings. Section 10-2.4.1202 of the Zoning Ordinance states that “No person shall erect, construct or alter the exterior of any building...without first obtaining design review approval...,” and Section 10-2.1.303 defines an alteration as “...chang[ing] the exterior appearance or the supporting members of a structure, such as bearing walls, columns, beams, or girders.” When Design Review approval is required for a building, such review typically includes paint color. The color of a building is then included in the final approved plans. Therefore, in cases where paint color was included in the original Design Review approval (including single family dwellings), a new Design Review application is required to change the paint color of a building to something significantly different from what was originally approved. This is required, not because it meets the Zoning Ordinance definition of an alteration, but because it constitutes a deviation from the original Design Review approval.

Action: A change in paint color to a building constructed prior to the enactment of the Design Review regulations in 1973 does not in itself require Design Review approval, unless the paint color was specified as part of the Design Review approval for a post-1973 alteration or addition. Design Review is not required if Planning Division staff determines that the change in paint color is in substantial compliance with the original Design Review approval.