

MERIDIAN STREET PRESERVATION COMMISSION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The following table has been prepared to ensure that questions regarding the Meridian Street Preservation Area are directed to the people that can best answer them.

Topic	Question and Answer
Certificates of Appropriateness	<p>Question-When is a Certificate of Appropriateness from the MSPC necessary?</p> <p>Answer-Title 925 IAC 2-4-1 states that a certificate of appropriateness from the commission is required prior to the construction, reconstruction, alteration, or demolition of any structure or feature on any Meridian Street property, except that no certificate shall be required for the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Normal repair and maintenance work consonant with proper upkeep of the property and which does not alter original materials, patterns, dimensions, location, style, size, and type. 2. Interior decoration, interior remodeling, and interior renovation not involving a change in the use of the property. 3. Removal of chain-link fences. 4. Installation or removal (except for healthy trees) of plant materials, provided they were not required in a previously issued certificate of appropriateness. 5. Installation of low borders on planting beds. 6. Installation of ground lighting in back yards. 7. Facade illumination that illuminates only the subject property. 8. Security lights mounted on buildings or installed by Indianapolis Power and Light on existing utility poles at the rear of properties that are deflected light sources and not visible from the street. 9. Incandescent wall or ceiling mounted light fixtures at the rear entrances of a building. 10. Fixtures in the public right-of-way placed there by governmental agencies, such as mail collection boxes and traffic regulation devices. 11. Temporary accessory items in rear yards, including garden furniture, children's play equipment, and small doghouses. 12. Reroofing of any roof surface, provided that any new materials match those of the previous in composition, size, shape, color, and texture. 13. Alteration of any flat roof when no change is visible from the ground. 14. Re-pointing of mortar joints with mortar matching in composition, color, and texture to the original. 15. Replacement of deteriorated wood siding or trim if less than five percent (5%) of any facade and if replacement wood matches the original exactly. 16. Removal of siding made of aluminum, vinyl, particle board, asphalt, asbestos, plywood, hardboard, or synthetic masonry. 17. Installation of interior storm windows and interior stained glass. 18. Replacement of missing or broken glass with new glass to match the previous. 19. Installation of visually unobtrusive exterior storm windows and doors provided no alterations are made to the opening and they are not attached to, or cover, any exterior trim. 20. Repainting with appropriate colors for the historic architectural styles represented in the area. 21. Window air conditioning units requiring no alteration to the window or opening and on a non-primary facade. 22. Air conditioning equipment and meter boxes on the rear of a house and not visible from the street. 23. HVAC and utility equipment on roofs if not visible from the front of the property at street level. 24. Burial of electric, telephone, and television cable requiring no new utility poles. 25. Aboveground installation of utility cables at the rear of the structure when underground service is not available. 26. Exterior surface-mounted vents, such as those for dryers, heaters, bathrooms, and kitchens, if no larger than one (1) square foot and not visible from the street. 27. Replacement of any utility pole with one (1) of matching materials and of equal or lesser height and for the same use.

Topic	Question and Answer
District Boundaries	Question -Is a certain address in either the primary or secondary areas of the Meridian Street Preservation Area? Answer -Consult the map on the MSPC home page located on the Meridian Street Foundation web site.
Filing Deadlines	Question -What are the filing deadlines for the MSPC public hearings? Answer -Consult the MSPC hearing schedule on the MSPC home page located on the Meridian Street Foundation web site.
MSPC Application	Question -I need to file for MSPC approval. How do I start? Answer -Consult the MSPC home page located on the Meridian Street Foundation web site. All of the necessary forms, along with instructions and an approval process chart, are located on this site.
MSPC Approval	Question -I see activity at a certain address in the Meridian Street Preservation Area. Are any MSPC approvals needed for this work? Have the necessary approvals been obtained? Answer -Contact the MSPC Chair, Kathleen Blackham, at 327-5165 or Kathleen.Blackham@indy.gov.
MSPC Approval	Question -I am contemplating doing some exterior work at my property. Do I need any MSPC approvals? Answer -Contact the MSPC Chair, Kathleen Blackham, at 327-5165 or Kathleen.Blackham@indy.gov.
MSPC Commission Members	Question -Who is the Meridian Street Preservation Commission? Answer -The Meridian Street Preservation Commission is made up of nine members, seven of which are appointed by the Governor with two additional members appointed by the Mayor. Members represent different portions of the MSPC area or various interests or agencies related to the preservation of the area.
MSPC Commission Members	Question -Can I contact a MSPC commissioner before the public hearing to get his or her opinion regarding a pending case, or to give my opinion of a pending case? Answer -MSPC commissioners are prohibited from communicating, directly or indirectly, regarding any issues associated with the merits of any pending case without notice and opportunity for all parties to participate in the communication.
Neighborhood Approval	Question -I am contemplating doing some exterior work at my property. How do I obtain neighborhood support for my proposal before I appear before the MSPC? Answer -Even though it's not required, contacting applicable organizations in advance and seeking their ideas and support regarding a proposed project is recommended. To find out which organizations exist in the area, consult the City of Indianapolis web site at http://www.indy.gov/eGov/City/DMD/Neighborhood_Services/Pages/community.aspx .
Ownership	Question -Do cases have to be filed by the property owner? Answer -Cases may be filed either by the property owner or their agent or representative.
Past MSPC Approvals	Question -I would like to know of any past MSPC approvals associated with a particular address. Who should I contact? Answer -Contact the MSPC Chair, Kathleen Blackham, at 327-5165 or Kathleen.Blackham@indy.gov.
Preservation Design Advice	Question -I am contemplating doing some exterior work at my property. How can I get advice about what might be acceptable to the MSPC? Answer -Consult the Meridian Street Design Guidelines on the MSPC home page located on the Meridian Street Foundation web site or contact the MSPC staff person, Connie Zeigler at 955-0377 or conniezeigler@sbcglobal.net .
Public Hearing	Question -What can I expect at a MSPC public hearing? Answer -As each case is called, petitioners and people in support of a petition are first given ten minutes to present information to the MSPC. Next, remonstrators are given fifteen minutes for comments. Then the petitioner is given an additional five minutes for rebuttal. The MSPC hears comments from staff before making a decision. Anyone speaking before the commission is required to state their name and address and be sworn in before speaking.
Rezoning or Variance	Question -I am contemplating doing some exterior work at my property. How can I find out if I need a rezoning or variance? Answer -Contact the Planner-on-Call at 327-5155.
Primary and Secondary Area Approvals	Question -Are all owners of Meridian Street Preservation Area properties required to meet the same requirements? Answer -No, the Meridian Street Preservation Area is divided into a primary and secondary [also known as bordering] areas. Requirements in the primary area more demanding.
Primary and Secondary Area Approvals	Question - What requirements must be met by owners of property in the primary area? Answer -Property owners in the primary area need to appear before the MSPC if a certificate of appropriateness (see answer to first question above), rezoning or variance is needed for their development proposal.

Topic	Question and Answer
Primary and Secondary Area Approvals	<p>Question- What requirements must be met by owners of property in the secondary area?</p> <p>Answer-Property owners in the secondary area only need to appear before the MSPC if a rezoning or variance is needed for their development proposal.</p>
Violations (Reporting)	<p>Question-I have observed activity on a property that I know does not have approval. How do I report it so that the work can be stopped?</p> <p>Answer-There are several types of inspectors including building, health and zoning inspectors. If you are certain that the issue that you would like to report is a zoning matter, contact Andy Dietz at 997-0117. If you are unsure about who to report to, contact the Mayor's Action Center at 327-4622.</p>
Violations (Reporting)	<p>Question-Work has been completed on a property in the Meridian Street Preservation Area that I suspect did not get MSPC approval. Who do I call?</p> <p>Answer-Call Kathleen Blackham at 327-5165 first to make certain that approval was necessary and, if so, to determine if approval was obtained from the MSPC. If a necessary approval was not obtained from the MSPC, contact either Andy Dietz at 997-0117 or the Mayor's Action Center at 327-4622.</p>
Violations (Reporting)	<p>Question-Who do I call to report trash in yards, broken windows, vacant homes with problems or other environmental problems?</p> <p>Answer-Call Lynne Lynch of the Marion County Health Department at 221-2374.</p>
Zoning Categories	<p>Question-What uses are allowed in a particular zoning category? What are the requirements of a particular zoning category?</p> <p>Answer-Contact the Planner-on-Call at 327-5155.</p>