

SHEPHERDSTOWN

Historic Preservation Education

KEY CONCEPTS OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Compatibility

- **What it means:** New work should look like it belongs next to our existing buildings — similar size, rooflines, materials, colors, and the proportions or spacings and regularity of the towns' existing arrangements (windows, porches, etc.).
- **Not a copy:** Do not fake being old. New parts should be distinctly new but still fit in.
- **Explore local examples:** Finding ideas for inspiration in new designs by choosing from the existing historic buildings within the Historic District helps provide examples of roof shapes, fencing styles, siding, and paint colors that match Shepherdstown's feel.



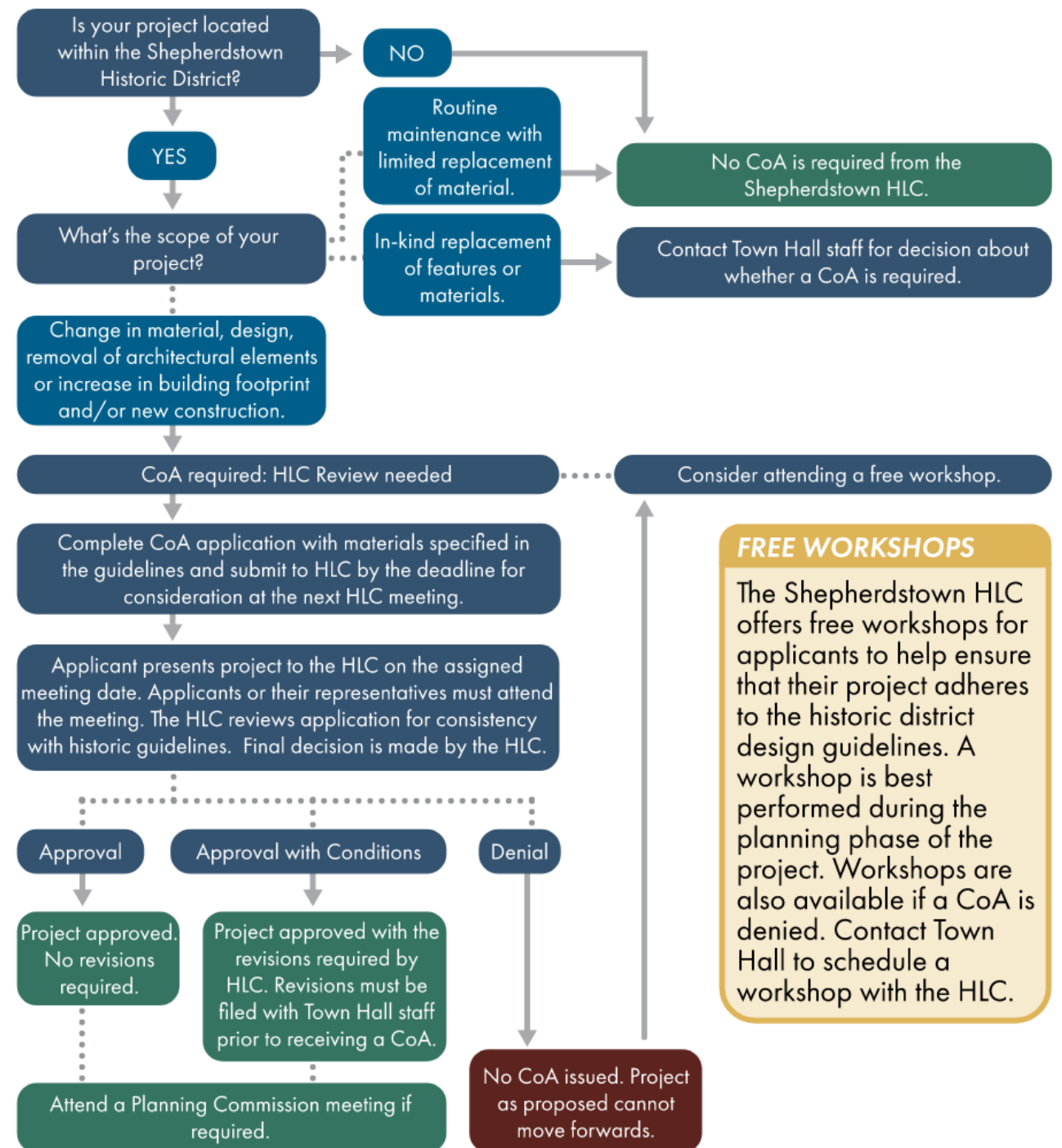
Sense of Place

- **What it means:** The special vibe of Shepherdstown — how it looks, its stories, streets, signs, landscapes, and how people use it. It is what makes Shepherdstown distinctly Shepherdstown.
- **Why it matters:** Preservation is about keeping that special atmosphere, not just saving our old buildings.
- **How to keep it:** Know and participate in the process. Involve neighbors, identify and protect key features, reuse buildings thoughtfully, and tell local stories through signage, plaques, or programming. Ensure changes to the historic environment do not detract or distract from the key features.



Appropriateness

- **What it means:** Changes (repairs, additions, new buildings, and demolitions) should respect the town's historic character, setting, and process.
- **Key points:** Keep important features (windows, porches, rooflines, and fences, etc.); make new work fit with the existing sizes and heights within the setting, setbacks from the street, and the special relationships between the existing buildings; new pieces should be clearly new, so they do not create fake history, but not distracting from the whole.
- **How it is handled here:** Projects go through our CoA (Certificate of Appropriateness) review by the Historic Landmarks Commission.



Historically Sympathetic Design

- **What it means:** Design new work so it complements nearby historic buildings without copying them or upstaging them.
- **For Best Results:** Match size, height, and proportions, use compatible materials already within the historic environment (brick, wood, similar roof pitches), keep the main street-facing sides consistent, and allow more flexibility on the back or less visible zones.
- **Goal:** harmony, not imitation — new buildings should feel like they belong without stealing the old look or distracting from it.



Other Preservation Concepts

- **Integrity & character features:** Keep the parts that make a place special — shape, materials, craftsmanship, the architectural styles, and their colors.
- **Least intervention & reversibility:** Fix as little as needed and avoid permanent changes when possible. It is better to let a building show its age than to replace it.
- **Adaptive reuse & sustainability:** Reuse old buildings for new purposes — it's greener and keeps the town alive and resilient.
- **Community & equity:** Include diverse voices so preservation reflects everyone who lives here. Listen and let that listening inform the design process.

