

“FEMA Variances”

Federal law requires that any structure undergoing a renovation costing 50% or more of its value must comply with current floodplain requirements. The 50% figure is calculated from the cost of the building alone, not including the land, and is based on the assessed value from the Charleston County tax records unless a certified valuation from a licensed appraiser is provided.

Buildings that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as contributing buildings to a National Register Historic District, may receive an exemption from the floodplain regulations if they meet certain requirements. (See map of National Register Historic District and Expansion Area.)

To exempt a building from compliance, a variance must be granted by the Board of Appeals, which is administered through the Building Inspections Division in the Department of Public Service. (Please note that this is different from the two Boards of Zoning Appeals, which are administered through the Zoning Division of the Department of Planning, Preservation & sustainability.) The following is the process for requesting a variance:

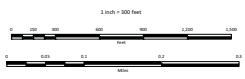
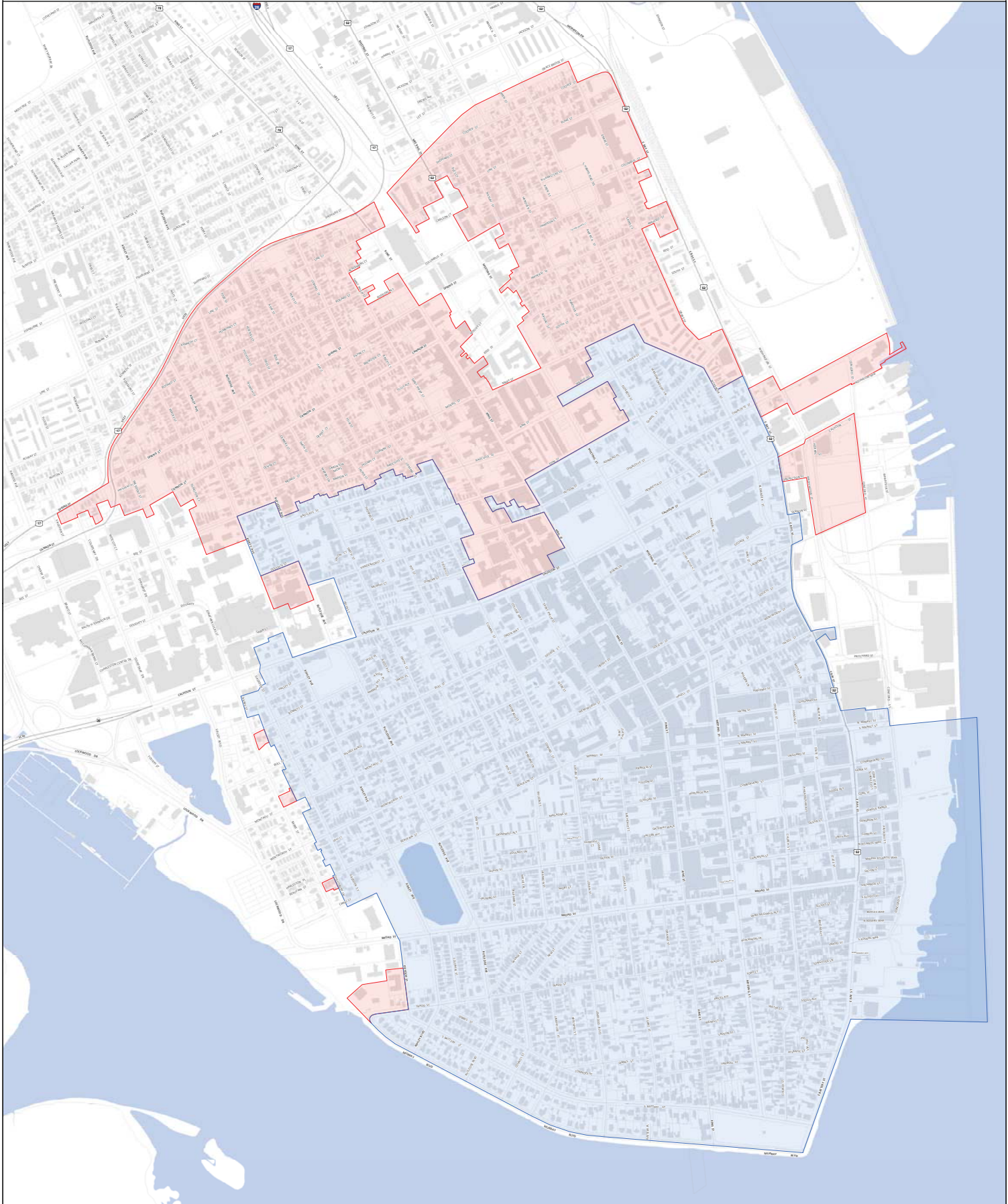
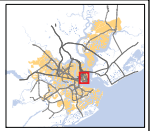
1. Provide photographs of all four sides of the building, including views showing it in context with neighboring structures, to the Preservation Division.
2. Preservation Division staff will forward the photographs, along with a letter requesting certification of National Register status, to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). The SHPO will certify that the building is a historic structure.
3. Plans for the work must be approved by the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) or its staff (where applicable). SHPO certification must be received prior to BAR approval.
4. Submit an application form and fee for the Board of Appeals (BOA) to the Building Inspections Division. The BOA meets at 4:30PM on the second Monday of each month.

Once the above steps are complete, the variance request will be heard at the next available Board of Adjustment and Appeals meeting. The following deadlines will apply:

- Materials submitted to Preservation Division - three weeks prior to BAR meeting, or if no BAR approval is required, three weeks prior to the desired BOA meeting date
- Application form & fee to Building Inspections Division - by Thursday prior to the desired meeting date

If you have questions concerning the variance process, please contact Edey Graves at 843-724-7438 or gravese@charleston-sc.gov; for questions concerning the certification process, please contact Erin Minnigan, BAR-S Administrator, at minnigane@charleston-sc.gov or 843-724-3793.

- National Register District
- Expansion Area
- Highways
- Streets
- Railroads
- Parcels
- Water



National Register District
The City of Charleston hereby certifies, representing the City of Charleston, that the information provided herein is a true and accurate representation of the National Register District as of the date of this map. The City of Charleston does not warrant, represent, or guarantee the accuracy, completeness, or timeliness of the information provided herein, including without limitation, the material contained in this map and the information contained in any other maps or documents that may be used in conjunction with this map. The City of Charleston shall not be held liable for any errors or omissions in this map or any other maps or documents that may be used in conjunction with this map.

