

## Facade Repairs

*My small co-op in a historic district is having work done on the building's facade. The contractor submitted plans to the Landmarks Preservation Commission, and the building has a permit to do the work. But I've noticed that the work the contractor is doing doesn't seem to reflect what is specified on the contract — including where he is permitted to paint, the paint finish that should be used and the special paints needed for stone. What should I do?*

*NoHo, Manhattan*

The [Landmarks Preservation Commission](#) must approve plans and issue permits for renovations done on the exteriors of buildings in historic districts, even those that are not individual landmarks. The commission reviews and approves details down to the color of paint and types of finishes used, said [Howard L. Zimmerman](#), an architect.

Ordinary repairs or maintenance, like repainting the building exterior to match an existing color, are an exception: They would generally not require a permit, said Caroline G. Harris, a Manhattan land use lawyer who specializes in historic preservation and zoning.

If you suspect that the contractor is not following the plans submitted to Landmarks, you could photograph the work and report the problem, either by calling the commission directly or by calling 311, said Simeon Bankoff, the executive director of the [Historic Districts Council](#). The department could issue fines against the building or even a stop-work order.

But before you report your building to the city, try to deal with the problem internally. Contact your building's managing agent and the co-op board. Tell them, in writing, that you believe there is a discrepancy between the work being performed and the work that was approved. Remind them that work subject to a permit should be done exactly as outlined in the approval, otherwise the building risks getting a violation, Ms. Harris said.

Insist that the contractor stop the work until any possible discrepancies can be reviewed. The architect involved in the project should be able to confirm whether the contractor is working with the appropriate paints and following the approved plan, Mr. Zimmerman said.