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HDC Policy for Generative AI in Submission Materials

As Generative AI applications become more advanced and commonplace, applicants may see these tools as a way to help them with applications before the Bristol Historic District Commission. While these are powerful tools that can help applicants, they can also create issues by distorting what, exactly, is being presented. Approval from the HDC is a legal process, and as such you are required to build exactly what is approved – if AI-generated plans prove to be impossible or inaccurate, that is going to require you to come back before the commission with revised plans.

In all cases, human-produced or at least reviewed materials are preferable. If you are using AI Generated Materials in an application, **the commission requires that all AI-Generated Materials be marked as such**. In addition, there are some cases in which the commission will typically never accept AI-Generated Materials and some where they may be appropriate. The Staff Coordinator shall have discretion to determine if an item is acceptable.

The Following uses for Generative AI are not typically acceptable:

- Full renderings of a potential project that is not overlaying or based on a real photograph of existing conditions
- Renderings or drawings of full projects for a vote before the commission
- To fully create Architectural or Construction Drawings – you are beholden to build what you present. Generative AI is not going to reliably design something that can be built.
- Use in lieu of manufacturer's specification sheets
- To write narratives of proposed work – again, you are beholden to what you propose in your application.

Some uses where Generative AI might be acceptable:

- Demonstrating the addition of single features where the feature is backed up by spec sheet or drawings checked by a human (i.e. showing the commission what a new window would look like on a wall, or showing what a door would look like installed)
- Early Concept Reviews so long as real photographs of existing conditions are used as the base

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