

Date: May 5, 2015

To: Frank F. Turner, Deputy City Manager

From: Christina D. Day, Director of Planning

Subject: Heritage Preservation Updates

We have an opportunity to make several changes that will enhance our service within the Heritage Preservation Program while holding fast to the ideals of the program. Outstanding service is the City's pillar, and the following changes are intended to provide such.

1. Update Heritage Preservation Ordinance & Downtown Guidelines: Utilizing funding budgeted for downtown studies and planning, we proposed to hire a heritage preservation specialist in May to assist in rewriting both the Downtown Heritage District Design Guidelines and the Heritage Resource Preservation Ordinance. Both the Heritage Commission and local heritage property owners have asked for clarification on these standards, and staff agrees that there are significant improvements to be made by refining language within the documents, incorporating illustrations, and bringing the City's program in line with best practices. Staff has already started work on this process and hopes to have it drafts for consideration by September 30, 2015. Pending the success of these priority items, the Haggard Park Heritage District Guidelines should also be updated within the next fiscal year, 2015-16.
2. Commission direction and training: Over the past 19 months the Heritage Commission has engaged in the following formal training events:
 - Three training sessions by Marcel Quimby of Quimby McCoy Preservation Architects LLC, where 5 of the current 7 members were present at each session.
 - November 2013 – History and basis of design review, national, state & local landmarks, different architectural styles, Historic Districts and Commission role
 - December 2013 – Certificate of Appropriateness review and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation
 - April 2014 – Certificate of Appropriateness review of additions/alterations, demolition and new construction, use of new materials, and energy efficiency
 - July 16 – 20, 2014 – Chairman Gary Graley and Commissioner Ed Coyle attended the National Alliance of Preservation Commission conference, which includes a biennial training program for local preservation boards and commissions. The conference offered tours, workshops, and educational sessions about a variety of topics related to design review, cultural resource management, legal issues, and historic preservation planning in urban, suburban and rural settings.

Staff will continue to provide training for new commissioners, as well as ongoing training for the Heritage Commission. We are recommending adoption of a regular training schedule providing topics from either the City Attorney's office, Planning staff, or a Historic Preservation consultant at least twice per year. Additionally, we are recommending that the Commission engage in a work session with the Council Liaisons to discuss expectations and any concerns on an annual basis, starting in the November of 2015.

3. Staff direction/approvals:

To improve efficiency of the process for gaining approvals in a timely manner, additional staff authority for certain approvals is desirable. We recommend that approvals are delegated to staff as follows.

Signs in the Downtown Heritage District which:

- Meet the Downtown Business/Government zoning district standards for signage per the Building Inspections department,
- Meets the Downtown Heritage District design guidelines (once modified in suggestion #1 above to ensure clarity),
- Are installed in a way that does not obstruct significant architectural features or create irreversible damage to the structure, and
- Location, material, style and design are deemed appropriate and complementary to the historic structure by the Heritage Preservation Officer.

Lighting in the Downtown Heritage District which:

- Meets the Downtown Heritage District design guidelines, and
- Location, material, style and design are deemed appropriate and complementary to the historic structure by the Heritage Preservation Officer.

An illustrated guide to direct these standards will be prepared for posting and distribution, providing suggestions to aid property owners in compliance, consistent with the updated Downtown Heritage District design guidelines. Additional staff level approvals may be appropriate once the new guidelines and ordinance are in place.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns regarding these suggestions.

XC: Bhavesh Mittal, Heritage Preservation Officer