



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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Review of Historic Preservation Ordinance planned

HOUSTON, August 28, 2014 – The City of Houston Planning and Development Department and the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission are seeking to refine the Historic Preservation Ordinance. The ordinance was updated in 2010 to create permanent protections for historic structures in designated districts and to establish a new process for creating an historic district.

The goal for this amendment is to correct and clarify targeted items and create greater consistency for the applicants and for the Commission. The amendments will provide applicants with additional options for a streamlined approval, provide the Commission with improved guidance on which to base their decision and create a more efficient process.

Over the next few months, a committee of the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission and the Houston Planning Commission will meet to establish amendments that may include the following improvements.

- Broaden the scope of projects that may obtain the Director’s Administrative Approval
- Provide clarity on what constitutes a Shall Approve
- Strengthen enforcement for violations
- Reduce and/or eliminate redundancies, inconsistencies and confusion in code language

“My direction is for the committee to look for tweaks that will make the ordinance easier to understand and more user-friendly,” said Mayor Annise Parker. “We are taking a scalpel, not a hatchet, to the ordinance. There is no intention of a wholesale reconsideration of the changes adopted in 2010.”

Committee meetings will be posted on the Department’s website, www.houstonplanning.com. The meetings will be open to the public. Citizens can email historic.ordinance@houstontx.gov to sign up to receive updates about the process, meetings and proposed amendments. A hearing will be held by the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission and a presentation will be made to the Council Committee on Quality of Life before being considered by City Council.

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