

News Release



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Temporary suspension of demolitions, relocations and incompatible new construction in effect in Houston's historic districts

HOUSTON, June 15, 2010 – As the first step in a process that will lead to enhancements to Houston's 15-year-old Historic Preservation Ordinance, City Council voted to temporarily discontinue the 90-day waiver for demolitions, relocations and incompatible new construction in City of Houston Historic Districts that are denied Certificates of Appropriateness (C of A) by the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission (HAHC). In other words, if the HAHC says no, the project cannot proceed. However, if the HAHC approves a C of A for demolition, relocation or new construction, the applicant is free to move forward with their plans after seeking the appropriate permits.

The temporary discontinuance also applies to new applications for historic districts. And, there is an exemption for applicants who expended money or took other preliminary steps toward a new construction project prior to council's passage of the ordinance. The measure will remain in effect until the end of the year or until amendments to the historic preservation ordinance are adopted, whichever is earlier.

Mayor Parker has appointed Council Member Sue Lovell to lead the task force that is reviewing the ordinance. Public meetings are planned in each of the city's historic districts. In addition, any recommended changes to the Historic Preservation Ordinance will be considered by the HAHC, the Planning Commission and City Council, providing numerous opportunities for dialogue and public input.

Houston's Historic Preservation Ordinance recognizes and protects the city's historic sites. By preserving the city's valuable historic resources, residents and visitors are visibly reminded of our culture and heritage, boosting civic pride and economic prosperity. More information is available online at the Planning Department web site at www.houstonplanning.com under Historic Preservation.