



To: Members of Dublin Architectural Review Board

From: Jennifer M. Rauch, AICP, Director of Community Planning & Development

Date: April 17, 2024

Initiated By: Sarah Tresouthick Holt, AICP, ASLA, Senior Planner

Re: Historic District Code and Guidelines Updates, Case 24-012ADMC

Summary

The Historic District Code updates, Phase 1, were adopted in December 2023 with the goals to change nomenclature of "Contributing/Non-contributing" to "Landmark/Background" and to confirm an Era of Significance, which was determined to be 1830-1920. As a part of those goals, additional significant buildings were added to the Historic District Map to acknowledge those outside the Era that have architectural value in the District. Likewise, those buildings outside the Era and not deemed to be architecturally significant were re-classified as Background, resulting in a decrease of significant buildings District-wide. Specifically, Franklin Street and some of S. Riverview Street were re-classified as Background. As a part of the Phase 1 activities, public meetings were held to identify additional areas of concern, which staff slated for this Phase 2 effort, now underway. These Phase 2 amendments include the opportunity to allow for additional administrative approvals, address any additional scrivener's errors, and provide additional clarifications about how Background buildings should be reviewed.

Background

Public meetings during the Phase 1 process were held for District residents and property owners on May 20, 2023, Sept 13, 2023, and Oct 11, 2023, and series of items were identified as opportunities for improvement regarding the speed and predictability for reviews in the District. An overview was also provided to the Architectural Review Board in September 2023 and the Board provided initial direction on possible improvements and modifications with the Phase 2 amendments. Additionally staff has identified a number of items as part of their review and use of the Code and Guidelines. The following includes a summary of the items raised and a recommended approach to address them with the Phase 2 amendments.

- Background building compatibility language within the Code and/or Guidelines based on the new nomenclature and the identified Era of Significance.
 - There is a public desire to review these buildings with much less focus on architectural details; staff wants to ensure that compatible scale, massing, and site design features are maintained.
 - Initial discussions with the Board indicated support for Background-related projects that do not include an increase in volume, footprint, or height to be approved by staff. The Board is requested to confirm this approach.

- Staff envisions a new section within Chapter 4 of the Guidelines to address Background buildings related to scale, massing, and guidance for additions. The Board is asked to comment on this approach.
- Expansion of the Administrative Approvals (AA) (see attachment for current Code language) to help streamline processing and avoid overloading the Board's agendas. Staff has noted a dramatic increase in AAs over the past years: 10 in 2022, 9 in 2023, and 8 for the first third of 2024, equating to a potential total of 32 for the year, and we want to encourage this expeditious approach to processing where appropriate. These are presented to the Board each quarter so that the Board can monitor AA activities and ensure transparency and trust in staff's approvals. The following is the suggested list for Background and Landmark AAs including Appendix G, for consideration:
 - Modifications to Background buildings where no building volume/footprint increase is requested (materials replacement, reconstruction of decks, window replacements), with appeals to the Board
 - Single sign approvals that meet Code criteria for Background and Landmark buildings
 - Residential hardscape features less than 3 feet tall (patios, low walls) for Background and Landmark buildings
 - Installation of awnings (residential and commercial) for Background and Landmark buildings
 - Lighting for residential and commercial projects, Background and Landmark
 - Commercial exterior furniture for Background and Landmark, and
 - HVAC and trash screening for Background and Landmark.
- Consideration of an opportunity to extend the timeframe for FDP approvals.
 - Suggested is an additional one year to allow larger projects ample time to obtain financing, develop construction drawings, and work through the permitting process.
 - If the Board is interested in this option, would the Board wish to review such requests, or could they be done administratively?
- Address remaining scriveners' errors.

Additional District Support

Since the adoption of the Phase 1 Code Update, staff has undertaken the following steps to improve District communication and outreach:

- Created a dedicated webpage on the City's website for "all things Historic District".
- Held office hours in the District for four months:
 - December 23 had over two dozen attendees (COhatch)
 - January 24 had 5 attendees (COhatch)
 - February had no attendees (Chamber)
 - March had 1 attendee (Chamber)
 - Based on declining numbers, staff will hold office hours once per calendar quarter. The next office hours will be on June 26th at COhatch.
- Engaged Greg Dale from McBride Dale Clarion as consultant for Phase 2.

Next Steps

Following the Board's feedback on the proposed direction for the Phase 2 amendments, Staff and the consultant will prepare draft language for the Code and Guidelines for review and

recommendation. Staff anticipates these proposed amendments would return to the Board at their June meeting.

Recommendations

Staff recommends the ARB review this memo and confirm the scope of the Phase 2 Code Amendments with the following questions as a guide for the discussion.

Discussion Questions

- 1) Does the Board agree with delegating authority to staff to approval certain MPRs for Background buildings?
- 2) Does the Board support the expansion of AAs as listed above? Are there other items to include?
- 3) Does the Board support minor edits to both the Code and Guidelines that place more emphasis on scale and context for Background buildings and less emphasis on the architectural details appropriate for Landmark buildings?
- 4) Does the Board support the potential to grant a one-year extension for previously-approved FDPs, and if so, should the Board have this responsibility or staff?
- 5) Other considerations by the Board.