

To: Members of Dublin Planning and Zoning Commission
From: Jennifer M. Rauch, AICP, Director of Community Planning & Development
Date: September 19, 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 goals to:

- Change nomenclature of "Contributing/Non-contributing" to "Landmark/Background"
- Confirm an Era of Significance, determined to be 1830-1920
- Add other significant buildings to the Historic District Map
- Reclassify buildings outside the Era not architecturally significant as Background, resulting in a decrease of significant buildings, including Franklin Street and some of S. Riverview Street
- Identify a Phase 2 effort
 - Increase types of Administrative Approvals
 - Provide additional clarifications about how Background buildings should be reviewed
 - Address any additional scrivener's errors

After a recommendation of approval with no changes by the Architectural Review Board, Phase 2 is now ready for a recommendation by this Commission.

Background

Public meetings during Phase 1 were held for District residents and property owners on May 20, 2023, Sept 13, 2023, and Oct 11, 2023, and a series of items was identified as possible improvements to the speed and predictability of District reviews. An overview of these improvements was provided to ARB in September 2023, with confirmation on Phase 2 direction obtained in April of 2024. The draft Code and Guidelines were delivered to ARB for extended review on the 26th of July. The ARB reviewed and recommended approval of the final drafts on August 28, 2024. City Council's first reading for the Code and resolution for the Guidelines is scheduled for October 21, with a goal for final adoption of the Code before the end of the year.

The following changes are noted in the attached final drafts:

- Inclusion of Background building compatibility language within the Code and Guidelines
- Expansion of the Administrative Approvals (AA) to include:
 - Modifications to Background buildings where no building volume/footprint increase is requested
 - Single sign approvals that meet Code criteria for both Landmark and Background building types
 - Residential hardscape features less than 3 feet tall for both building types
 - Replacement of existing awnings for both building types (new awnings require ARB review)
 - Lighting for residential and commercial projects for both building types

- Commercial exterior furniture for both building types, and
- HVAC and trash screening for both building types where building architecture is not affected.
- Addition of a timeframe extension for Final Development Plan (FDP) approvals
- Corrections to scrivener's errors
- Consolidation of the Administrative Departure, Waiver, and new Variance Code sections
 - Administrative Departures are no longer needed and have been removed
 - All requests for deviations from numerical standards are termed Waivers for clarity
 - Waivers above 20 percent stay with the ARB
 - Historic District variances were heard by the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) this year, and there was confusion on the nuances of applying this Code and Guidelines versus the "suburban" variances the BZA normally sees. Staff, the ARB, and our consultant agreed that it made sense to keep Historic District variances, now termed Waivers, with the ARB to allow appropriate application of the Code and Guidelines.
 - Additional language included that the Waiver amount must be the minimum required to solve the identified issue
 - The approach was confirmed by the Law Office
 - It allows applicants to make a case before one board for very site-specific circumstances, thus simplifying the process

Request

Staff requests the PZC review this memo and the attached Final Draft of the Code and Guidelines and recommend approval of both to City Council.