

Virtual Meeting Q & A Session:

- Will there be different fees for small residential projects compared to commercial?
 - Yes, the fees are lower for residential projects. The full fee schedule can be found on the second page of the application form, available on our website at <https://pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/hrc>.
- Are there exterior modifications that don't require a building permit?
 - Yes, any exterior modifications may require historic review, but not necessarily a building permit. One example would be painting. The list of work not requiring a building permit can be found at <https://pittsburghpa.gov/pli/not-requiring-permit>.
- What is the approach to enforcement?
 - PLI enforces the historic preservation code.
- What is the process to modify guidelines?
 - The community would need to form a committee and develop new guidelines, which would then receive approval by HRC. Staff can help with this process.
- I'm a new owner on the east side of Sherman. Am I now in the historic district? If so, will I need to get approval from here on out then?
 - Yes, you are in the expansion area. Yes, for exterior work and things you can see from the public right-of-way you will need HRC approval. HRC approval is required prior to obtaining building permit. Also, changes in materials require HRC approval.
- If we previously renovated our home, do we now need approval?
 - No.
- What are the benefits of expansion?
 - See [Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation Report](https://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/redtail/images/5007_Economic_Benefits_of_Historic_Preservation.pdf) available on our website: https://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/redtail/images/5007_Economic_Benefits_of_Historic_Preservation.pdf.
- What was the effective date of the expansion?
 - April 21, 2020, the date of the PA Supreme Court decision.
- My property is on the northeast corner of the map. Is there a better map so I can see if my property is in the boundary?
 - We will work to update the map. Also, the Zoning interactive map (choose Pittsburgh City Historic Districts in the layers) is available here: <https://gis.pittsburghpa.gov/pghzoning/>
- How can we modify the rules?
 - Guidelines can be adjusted; see answer above to how to change the guidelines. Allegheny West, Roslyn Place, etc. have updated or are working on their guidelines. Please contact staff and we can have that conversation.
- Can you give examples of over-the-counter permissions?
 - Painting is an over-the-counter approval and is just done to make sure unpainted brick or stone is not being painted.. We don't choose the color, that is up to you and we just ask that you try to be respectful of your neighbors. There is no fee associated with painting.

- We have vinyl windows that may need to be replaced. Will I need approval? And, what about painting with same color?
 - If you already have vinyl windows, new vinyl windows are allowed but an over-the-counter approval is needed. In general, the level of historic review depends on what you have now and what materials you are proposing. The painting is also an over-the-counter approval.
- Are there alternative plans due to COVID to review over-the-counter permits?
 - Historic review staff is working from home and completing over-the-counter reviews as well as holding virtual HRC meetings to review larger projects. You can submit through our online system at <https://pittsburghpa.gov/onestoppgh/>. We will email you for additional information if needed and get everything done remotely.
- Are building permits applied for prior to April 21, 2020 required to get HRC approval?
 - Building permits will not be revoked.
- Can you discuss rules for demolition?
 - Any demolition, including additions and garages, has to go to HRC to move forward. HRC may ask for proof that demolition is necessary. Condition is not determinant.
- HRC doesn't review art and Art Commission doesn't review private property. How are these handled?
 - Statuary/garden art is not reviewed. The guidelines can be altered to add guidelines about art if desired.
- How does contemporary design work in the historic district?
 - We don't want to recreate historic buildings, but new construction should be compatible with the neighborhood and more information can be incorporated into design guidelines. Design guidelines come from the neighborhood, not the City, and can reflect what you want to see in your neighborhood.
- What are the guidelines if there aren't adopted guidelines?
 - In historic districts with no adopted guidelines, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are used and can be found at <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments/treatment-rehabilitation.htm>.
- If there are NPS standards, will the MWS guidelines be used?
 - The MWS guidelines will be used until we have an updated version.
- Financial assistance – are there any assistance opportunities for low income residents?
 - Councilman Lavelle has reached out to the URA for a façade renovation assistance. If anyone is having housing issues, please contact Councilman Lavelle.
- What is the plan to share the information on financial resources, advice?
 - Once we have various resources identified, we can send out a mailer or hold another community meeting, particularly to discuss new guidelines for the expanded area.
- How does this impact the renovations by Northside Associates?
 - I believe their work began prior to this expansion being enacted.
- What is the stance on aluminum clad, energy efficient windows?
 - There is some information on windows in the MWS guidelines, but these types of windows are not addressed. In general, the guidelines advise wooden windows on the front façades of houses, and alternate types of windows may be allowable on side

and rear façades that may be less visible. The review would also depend on what type of windows you currently have.

- Back to the Northside Associates question. They have permits and are aware of HRC process. They don't feel it will impact their renovations.
- Can you talk about the make-up of the HRC, including demographics?
 - Karen Loysen, architect; Lucia Aguirre, architect; Matthew Falcone, Preservation PGH; James Hill, Mayors Office; Richard Snipe, PHDC; Dave Green, PLI; open slot for Director of DCP.
- Does HRC have discretion to delay implementation until the economy has recovered?
 - No, the City doesn't have ability to delay the expansion enactment. It is currently in effect.

Historic District FAQs:

How will the historic district affect me?

- Changes to the exterior of your property will need to be looked at by Historic Preservation staff and undergo review depending on the details of the project.
- Historic review is integrated into the normal process of obtaining a building permit.
- The Historic Preservation staff are two dedicated planners who are committed to providing assistance with the process to all applicants and homeowners. Our goal is to make the process as painless as possible.

What is the process?

- There is no requirement that any work be done to your property. The process only starts when you decide to do exterior work.
- The historic district does include a variety of homes, including very historic ones but also ones with more modern materials. Any materials that you have on your house right now are "grandfathered in" and you are allowed to replace them with the same materials if you choose.
- The Mexican War Streets guidelines, found on our website at https://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/05_Mexican_War_Streets_Guidelines.pdf, are a good place to start when planning your project.
- Most projects involving repairs, replacement with the same materials, or painting can be reviewed and approved by staff within a few days.
- Larger projects, such as new construction, construction of an addition or demolition of a garage, will be reviewed by our Historic Review Commission. The HRC meets once a month and considers all applications carefully on a case-by-case basis.
- There is a process available to appeal a decision of the Historic Review Commission called the Certificate of Economic Hardship Application.

- When submitting an application for historic review, the following application materials may be required:
 - a. An application form (available on our website)
 - b. Photos of your property
 - c. Description of the project
 - d. Details of the materials to be used
- There may be a fee for historic review depending on the project. We have tried to keep the fees for homeowners reasonable at \$25 for smaller projects and \$100 for larger projects reviewed by the HRC. If your project is repainting only, there is no fee, and the choice of paint color is up to you.

What are the benefits of historic designation?

- Historic preservation efforts can have significant positive impacts on property values, neighborhood revitalization, tourism activity, job creation, and tax revenue generation. More information can be found on our website at https://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/redtail/images/5007_Economic_Benefits_of_Historic_Preservation.pdf.
- Historic designation is good for the environment, as it emphasizes repair and restoration rather than replacement and discourages unnecessary demolition and waste.
- The Historic Preservation staff is always working to make the process more productive and to involve residents and community groups. We look forward to working with your community on projects like this.

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*Please note that email is the best contact method at this time.