



CHARLOTTE HISTORIC **HDC** DISTRICT COMMISSION

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department



**POLICY & DESIGN
GUIDELINES**

for
Local Historic Districts

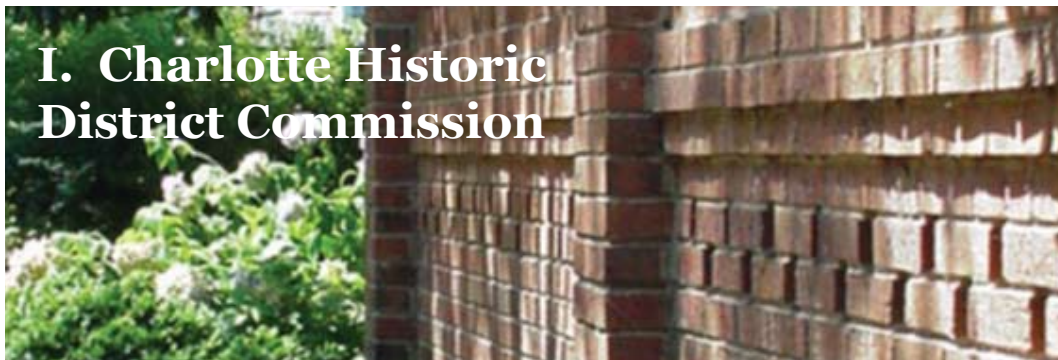
Adopted by the Charlotte Historic District Commission
April 2011 as amended

Table of Contents

- I. Charlotte Historic District Commission 1**
 - Introduction 1
 - The Charlotte Historic District Commission 1
 - Statement of Philosophy 2
 - Local Historic Districts 3
 - Fourth Ward
 - Dilworth
 - Plaza-Midwood
 - Wesley Heights
 - Hermitage Court
 - Wilmore

- II. Local Historic District Review and Approval Process 11**
 - Applying for a Certificate of Appropriateness 11
 - How Applications for Certificates of Appropriateness are Evaluated 15
 - Secretary of Interior’s Standards 16
 - Appeals of Decisions of the Historic District Commission 17
 - Elevation Requirements 18
 - Site Plan Requirements 20

- III. Policy & Design Guidelines 23**
 - Projects Eligible for
 - Administrative Approval. 23
 - Repair and Maintenance. 25
 - Replacement Roofing. 25
 - Windows and Doors. 26
 - Storm Windows and Doors. 29
 - Surface Cleaning. 29
 - Painting. 30
 - Parging 33
 - New Construction. 34
 - Demolition. 35
 - Additions. 36
 - Restoration. 39
 - Setback. 40
 - Handicapped Access Facilities. 40
 - Enclosure of Existing Porches. 43
 - Other Architectural Features. 44
 - Chimneys
 - Shutters
 - Gutters
 - Porch Rails
 - Light Fixtures
 - Building Materials 48
 - Traditional Building Materials
 - Non-Traditional Building Materials
 - Accessory Buildings. 50
 - Garages
 - Other Accessory Buildings
 - Accessory Structures. 54
 - Satellite Dishes
 - Antennae
 - Mechanical Units
 - Dumpsters
 - Fences. 56
 - Landscaping. 59
 - Tree Removal
 - Landscaping Plans
 - Landscape and Site Features
 - Parking Areas, Paving, and Driveways. . 63
 - Rear Yards. 64
 - Signage. 65
 - Enforcement. 71
 - Details 72
 - Note Page 77
 - Application Form 81



I. Charlotte Historic District Commission

INTRODUCTION

The Charlotte Historic District Commission was established in 1976 by an act of City Council as part of the redevelopment of Fourth Ward. Today, the Commission's responsibilities have grown beyond Fourth Ward to include design review and enforcement in other designated Local Historic Districts. In addition, the HDC and its Staff provide historic preservation education and technical advice for other local government agencies and the community at large.

The Policy & Design Guidelines are the result of an effort by the Historic District Commission and its Staff to state the Commission's philosophy and to outline its policies. The manual contains a wide variety of information, and is designed to clarify the application process and to give Local Historic District property owners an understanding of what constitutes appropriate rehabilitation, renovation, and construction.

The Historic District Commission and its Staff want this manual to be useful for anyone needing information on development and renovation in Charlotte's Local Historic Districts. We welcome input and comments from the public.

THE CHARLOTTE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

The Charlotte Historic District Commission consists of twelve Members appointed by the Mayor and City Council. Under a resolution of City Council, the HDC has representatives who own property, live, or own businesses within the Local Historic Districts. Other Members are appointed at large from the entire community. A majority of the Commission's Members must have some demonstrable expertise or experience in the areas of neighborhood preservation, architecture, planning, history or other areas directly related to the mission of the Historic District Commission mission. A current list of Members can be obtained by contacting the HDC Office.

The Historic District Commission Staff is a part of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department.

*The Charlotte Historic District Commission
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center
600 East Fourth Street
Charlotte, North Carolina 28202-2853
704-336-2302
704-336-5994
704-336-2205*

CharlotteHDC@CharlotteNC.gov

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Charlotte's Historic District Ordinance states the purpose of Local Historic Districts and of the Commission that administers those districts:

“The purpose of a Local Historic District is to encourage the restoration, preservation, rehabilitation, and conservation of historically significant areas, structures, buildings, sites, and objects and their surroundings from potentially adverse influences which may cause the decline, decay, or total destruction of important historical, architectural, and archaeological features, which are a part of the city’s heritage, and to review new construction design to ensure compatibility with the character of the district.”

It is the responsibility of the Members of the Historic District Commission to identify and protect the overall character of Charlotte's historic neighborhoods that have been designated by City Council as Local Historic Districts.

Historic preservation is not limited to the saving of the very old, or of examples of “high-style” architecture. It is not interested only in the protection of the buildings inhabited by our nation’s and our city’s founders. It is more a perspective based on the belief that our surroundings should have a human scale, a pedestrian orientation, visual variety and texture, and areas of green space and trees. It is also the recognition that historic resources, whether built in 1741 or 1941, belong to the entire community as part of our collective heritage. It is the belief that owners and residents of historic properties or properties within historic districts are stewards of an important part of our visual history.

Historic preservation is not limited to freezing properties in time. While that approach might be appropriate for such places as Old Salem or Colonial Williamsburg, it is not the proper approach for such vital residential neighborhoods as Charlotte's Local Historic Districts. Charlotte's historic neighborhoods need to keep up with the times and can easily do so without the loss of historical and architectural integrity. Historic neighborhoods can and should be vital, vibrant, living, growing, thriving places to live and to work.

It is the aim of the Historic District Commission to champion and spread these ideas throughout our city. The HDC and its Staff are committed to the concepts of historic preservation and to assisting residents and owners in historic areas in their efforts to make their properties livable and functional while maintaining those characteristics that help illustrate our common history of growth and prosperity. There is a commitment to aiding present-day growth and development within the context of Charlotte's designated Local Historic Districts. Charlotte cannot foresee its future without a sense of its past and an appreciation for the physical reminders of that past.

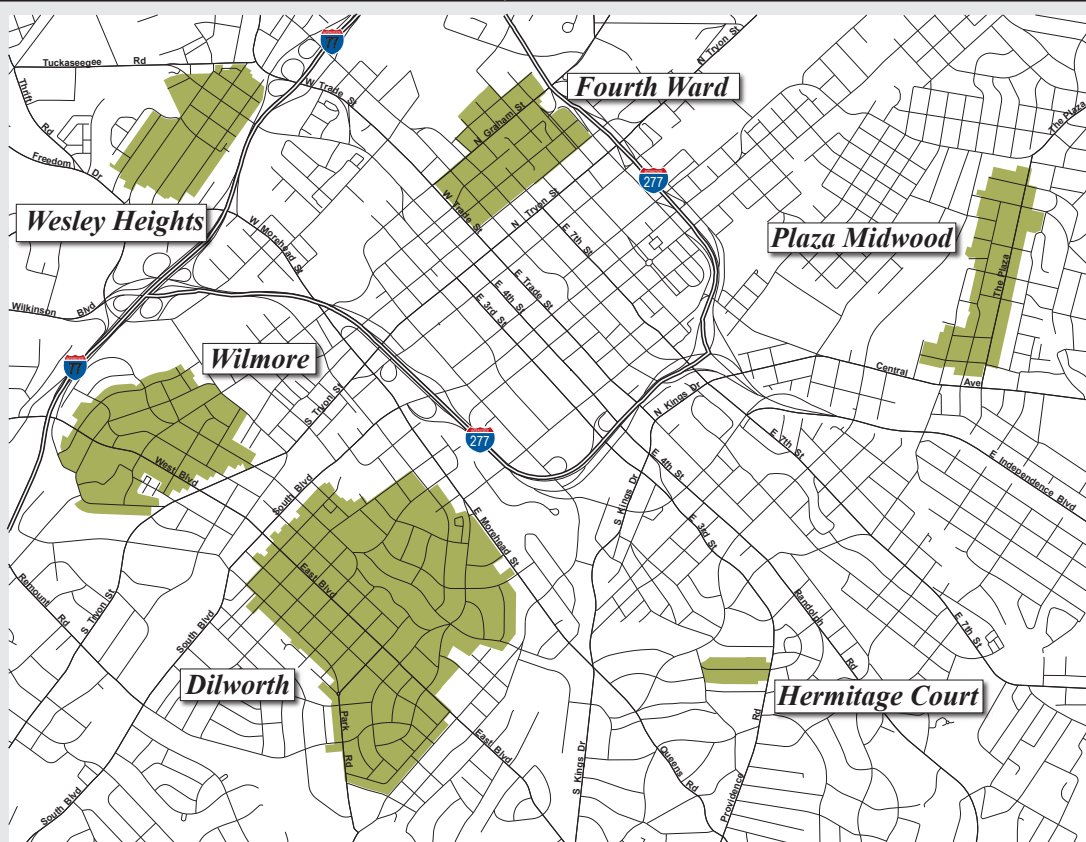
LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

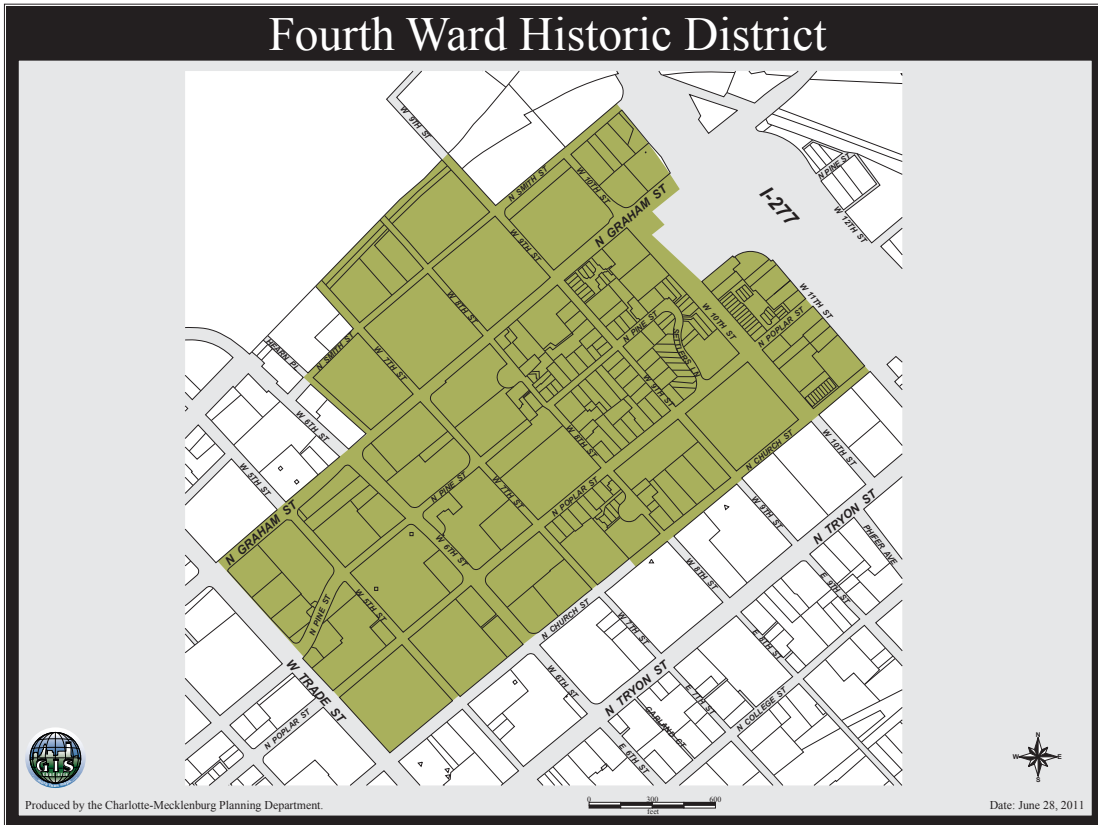
The Charlotte City Council has designated six Local Historic Districts, in recognition of the significance of each area in Charlotte's social and physical history. All properties within local historic districts are under the jurisdiction of the Charlotte Historic District Commission. The Charlotte City Zoning Code Section 10.201-217 states:

All demolition, construction, additions or exterior alterations to these properties must be approved in advance by the Historic District Commission or its Staff.

Failure to gain such approval can result in enforcement action. Anyone planning work in a Local Historic District should contact the Charlotte Historic District Commission Staff at 704-336-2302 or email CharlotteHDC@CharlotteNC.gov

Local Historic Districts Charlotte, North Carolina





Fourth Ward Local Historic District (Designated 1976)

In the 1850's, Fourth Ward was a prosperous residential area, convenient to downtown businesses and shops. As residential development shifted to the suburbs with the opening of Dilworth in the late nineteenth century, all of Charlotte's original residential wards would see an eventual decline. By the 1970's, many of Fourth Ward's Victorian homes had been demolished or converted to boarding houses and offices. Through the combined efforts of civic and community leaders, Fourth Ward underwent a dramatic revitalization in the 1970's.



Dilworth Local Historic District
(Designated 1983, 1992)

Since its inception in the 1890's, Dilworth has been one of Charlotte's most distinctive neighborhoods. Developed as the City's first suburb, Dilworth was connected to downtown by Charlotte's first electric streetcar. The success of the initial development of Dilworth led its creator, Edward Dilworth Latta, to expand the neighborhood in the 1910's, under a plan by the Olmsted Brothers, then the nation's preeminent landscape architects.

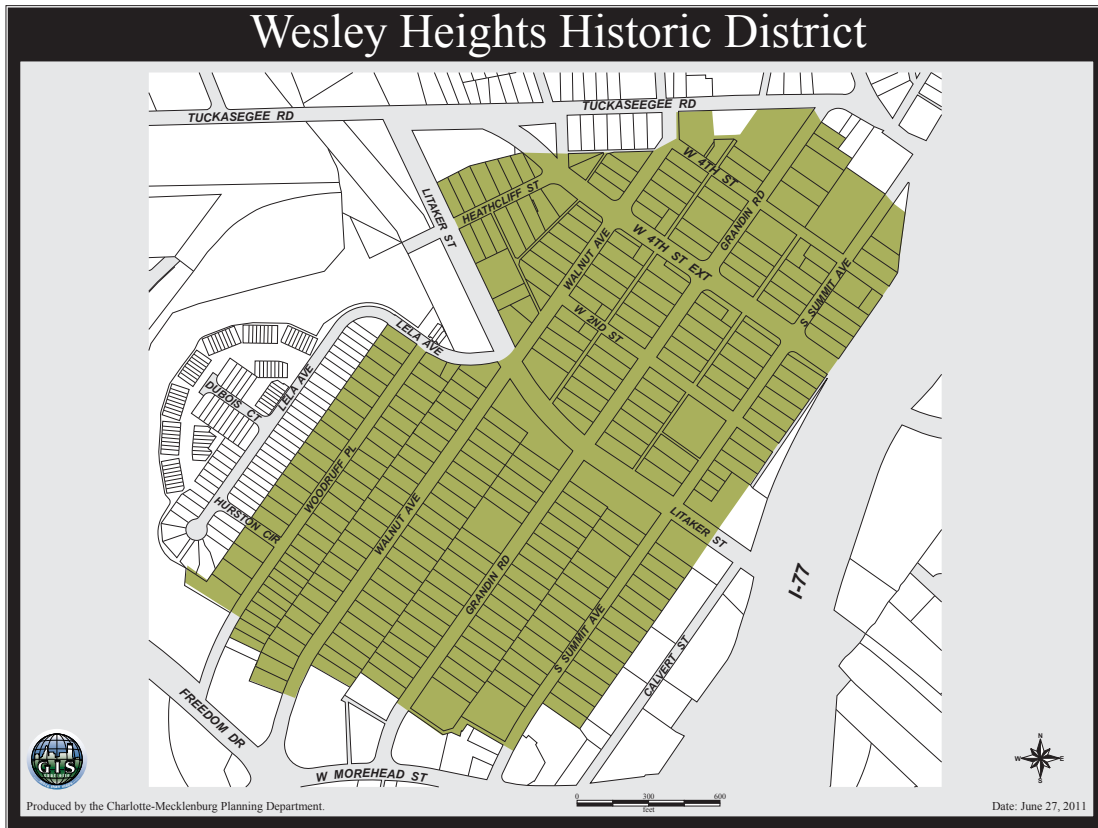
Although their plan was never fully implemented, the Olmsted's curved roads and dramatic landscaping set the tone for much of Charlotte's future character. In 1987, Dilworth was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Plaza-Midwood Local Historic District (Designated 1992)

Developed in the 1910's and 1920's, Plaza-Midwood is the product of several different developments undertaken by various interests. These early small neighborhoods grew together over the years to become today's Plaza-Midwood.

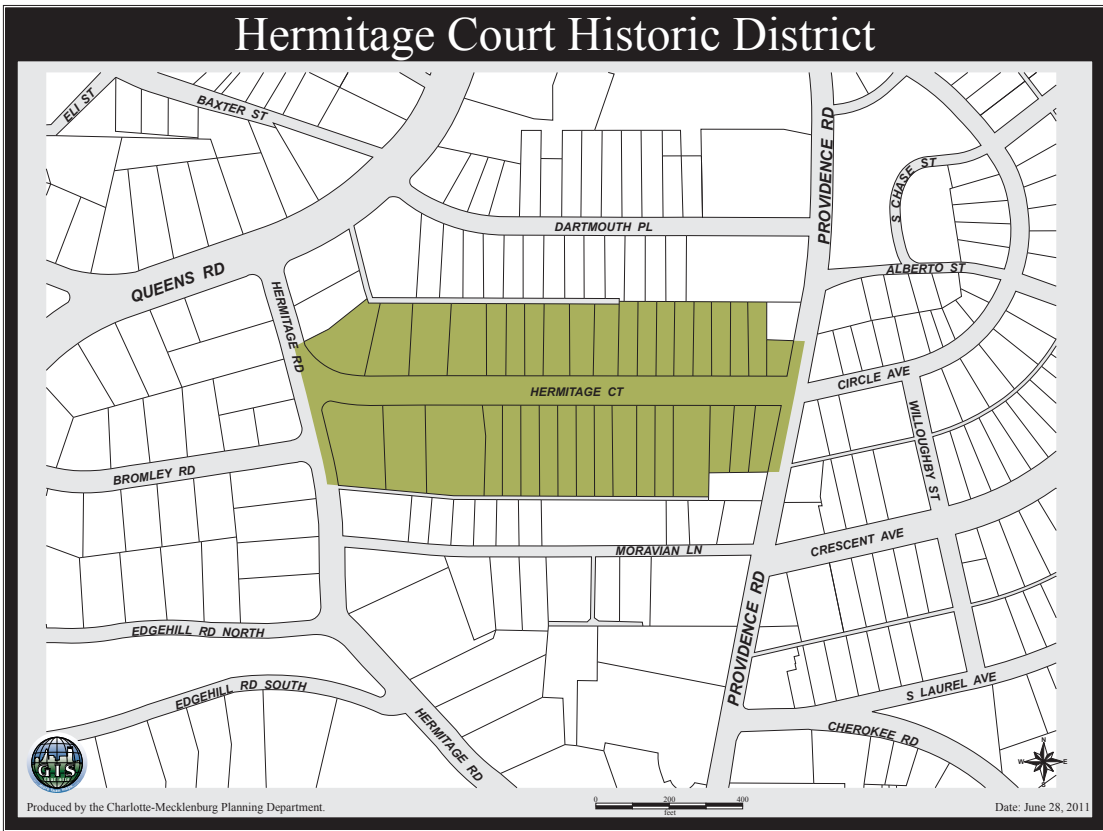
Fluctuating economic conditions during the area's growth and the differing visions of the many developers involved came together to create the most eclectic of Charlotte's Local Historic Districts. The Plaza-Midwood Local Historic District came about as a result of efforts of neighborhood residents.



Wesley Heights Local Historic District (Designated 1994)

Charlotte's first Local Historic District located on the Westside, Wesley Heights retains an amazing degree of its original character.

The neighborhood was developed primarily in the 1920's, and involved some of the same interests responsible for the creation of Elizabeth. Wesley Heights has survived some dramatic changes in its history, and yet still appears much like it did when it was served by Charlotte's streetcar system with its Bungalow style homes and tree-canopied streets. The coordinated efforts of Wesley Heights' residents led to the listing of the neighborhood both on the National Register of Historic Places and as a Local Historic District.



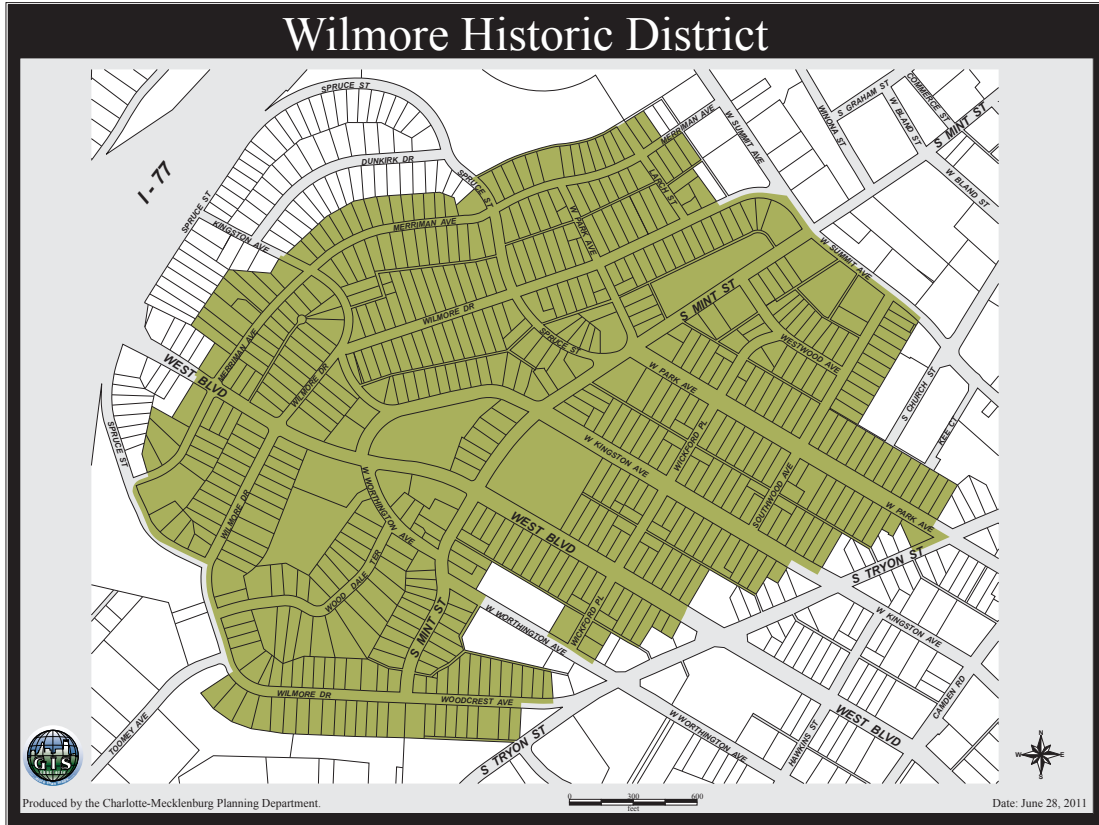
Hermitage Court Local Historic District (Designated 2006)

In 1911, a new suburban development was announced, to be built on the southern edge of Charlotte. This new subdivision, carved out of a cotton farm long owned by the Myers family, became Myers Park, one of Charlotte’s best known and most desirable subdivisions.

The layout of Myers Park was designed by John Nolen, one of the most notable landscape architects and urban designers of his day. Following Nolen’s vision of a new town in a forest, The Stephens Company, a family business of the Myers family, developed the overwhelming majority of Myers Park. There were, however, a few small sections that were developed by other interests under the umbrella of the Stephens Company, and within the overall plan conceived by Nolen and his protégé, Earle Sumner Draper.

Hermitage Court was one of these small areas, and was developed by Charlotte builder F. M. Simmons. Simmons was responsible for the stone gateways that flank each end of Hermitage Court. He also built for himself the house at 625 Hermitage Court. This grand Colonial Revival style house, completed in 1913, is one of the oldest existing homes in Myers Park.

A 1914 survey map shows the original street and lot layout for Myers Park, and includes Hermitage Court stretching from Simmon’s home east to Providence Road. With the exception of two later multi-family projects, the homes along Hermitage Court were all constructed between 1913 and 1925, and include some of the oldest homes in the neighborhood. The architecture of Hermitage Court is an eclectic mix of Bungalow style houses interspersed with examples of several styles that were popular in the early 20th Century, including Colonial and Tudor revival homes. Almost a century later, the overwhelming majority of the houses retain their original architectural character.



Wilmore Local Historic District (Designated 2010)

Wilmore, located to the southwest of downtown Charlotte, was developed as a streetcar suburb in the early years of the 20th Century. Wilmore mirrors the single family bungalows and wide curvilinear streets and sidewalks of Dilworth, and shared the streetcar line from the center of town with this sister neighborhood.

The early history of the area that became the Wilmore area included its long use as farmland. It also contained parts of Blandville, one of several African-American villages that lay just outside the town of Charlotte, and The Rudisill Gold Mine, one of the most productive of the mines that fueled the country's first gold rush in and around Charlotte.

In 1906, developer F. C. Abbot and the Southern Realty Company purchased the land that would become Wilmore from several owners. Abbot combined the names of two of those former owners, the Wilson and Moore families, to create the name "Wilmore" for the new planned suburb just south of the rapidly growing town of Charlotte.

Wilmore contains a wide range of styles and materials in its buildings, with the majority exhibiting the low overhanging roofs, full-width front porches and craftsman details typical of the Bungalow style. Although it is primarily a single family neighborhood, Wilmore is also home to numerous duplexes, apartment buildings and churches, as well as commercial and industrial buildings.



II. Historic District Review & Approval Process

APPLYING FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

The Charlotte Historic District Ordinance requires that a Certificate of Appropriateness be obtained prior to any exterior change to any property within a designated Local Historic District. A Certificate of Appropriateness is a document certifying that a project within a locally designated historic district meets the standards outlined in state and local law for such work. A building permit that includes exterior work cannot be issued within a Local Historic District until either the Historic District Commission or its Staff has first issued a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed project. Exterior work that does not require a building permit must still receive a Certificate of Appropriateness before work begins.

The Historic District Commission and its Staff want to work with all Local Historic District property owners to ensure that the review and approval process is as quick and easy as possible, while making sure that the requirements of the ordinance are met. The goal of the Members and Staff of the Historic District Commission is to encourage positive change and growth in Charlotte's designated Local Historic Districts. The HDC is committed to working with all Local Historic District property owners, residents and businesses to manage that positive growth in a way that preserves the very qualities that draw people to these areas. Every effort is made to find ways to accommodate the growth and development needs of property owners within the guidelines established by the HDC under state and local law.

The following process can guide an applicant through the steps of the HDC application and review process.

Determining if a Project Requires HDC Approval

Contact the HDC Staff as early as possible in the planning of any project. Under the terms of the Charlotte Historic District Ordinance, no property within a Local Historic District can be altered or improved until the owner consults with the Staff of the Commission to determine if a Certificate of Appropriateness is required.

Filing a Certificate of Appropriateness Application

If a Certificate of Appropriateness is required, Staff will assist applicants in completing an application and in determining what additional documentation will be needed in order for a project to be evaluated. Because the circumstances of

each application and each property can differ, the necessary documentation can vary widely from proposal to proposal.

All proposals will require a completed, signed application form. Most proposals will require photographs and some form of drawings, the detail of which will be determined by the scope of the project. A checklist is included on the application form, which can be used to determine what will be required to document the project.

Please see pages 18 -22 for Elevation and Site Plan Requirements.

Review by HDC Staff

Upon receiving an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, HDC Staff will review the application material to ensure that adequate information has been submitted to evaluate the proposal. If additional information is needed or if there is a question about some part of the material, Staff may contact the applicant for clarification or additional information. Once all the necessary information is in place, the application will undergo one of two types of review.

1. Administrative Approval:

Projects that meet certain criteria can be reviewed and approved by Staff. Under normal circumstances, such reviews usually take no more than five working days. (A list of project types that qualify for administrative approval is on pages 23 and 24.) In order to receive an administrative approval, project proposals must fall within current HDC policy. Projects that Staff judges to be outside these guidelines will be referred to the full Historic District Commission for review.

2. Referral to Full HDC:

Projects not eligible for administrative approval will be placed on the agenda of the next available monthly Historic District Commission meeting. These meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month, and application deadlines are available from the HDC office. HDC application deadlines and meeting dates are updated annually.

For projects requiring a hearing before the HDC, Staff is required by law to make reasonable effort to inform all adjacent property owners of the hearing. This allows anyone potentially affected by a project the opportunity to comment on that project. “Adjacent” is defined as all parcels within 300 feet in all directions of the subject property.

Meeting with the Historic District Commission

The Charlotte Historic District Commission meets the second Wednesday of each month at 3:00 p.m. in the Government Center at 600 East Fourth Street. The Members of the HDC will review each application according to the following procedure:

Application Review Process

- 1. Presentation of Application by HDC Staff**
 - A. Presentation on Property and Outline of Proposal*
 - B. Comments by Staff on Appropriateness of the Project*
 - C. Recommendations and/or suggestions*
- 2. Presentation by the Applicant**
- 3. Comments by Other Interested Parties**
 - A. Comments by Interested Parties*
 - B. Synopsis of Comments received by HDC Staff*
- 4. Consideration by the Historic District Commission**
 - A. Questions by the HDC to Applicant, Staff and Others*
 - B. Discussion among Commission Members*
 - C. Adoption of Findings of Fact by the Commission*
 - D. Final Vote by the Commission*

The final vote of the Historic District Commission on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness will lead to one of these results.

A. Approval

Once approval is granted by the HDC, a Certificate of Appropriateness will be issued by Staff, and a building permit, if necessary, can be obtained. Any changes to the plans approved by the HDC must be referred to the Commission’s Staff. If Staff determines that the change to the plans results in a substantive difference from the approved plans, the project must go back before the Commission.

B. Conceptual Approval

This preliminary type of approval indicates that a proposal appears to meet the overall spirit of the Policy and Design Guidelines, but that there are details or design issues that need to be addressed before a final approval can be granted. Conceptual approvals are generally used for larger-scale, more complicated projects that have a long design process, but can also be issued for smaller projects that need minor design changes. The Commission will specify in a motion for Conceptual Approval what parts of the proposal meet the requirements for the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, and what issues need to be addressed by the applicant before the Commission can consider granting a final approval for the project.

C. Deferral

Occasionally, the Commission determines a proposal may need some adjustments or that additional information is needed before final approval can be granted. These changes are often beyond what can be resolved in the setting of a formal Commission meeting. In such cases, the HDC may defer final action on the application in order for the applicant, HDC, and Staff to work together to resolve any outstanding issues.

D. Denial

A denial by the HDC means that the proposed project does not meet the Policy & Design Guidelines, and that no exceptions are warranted. A denied project proposal cannot be carried out. A denied application cannot be re-submitted to the HDC for a period of six months unless there has been some “substantial change of circumstance” in City or HDC policy or regarding the property itself. The Historic District Commission will make all determinations on resubmissions on a case-by-case basis, according to information provided by the applicant.

HOW APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS ARE EVALUATED

State and local laws give the HDC clear direction on how projects are to be evaluated. The ordinance directs the Commission to use the current version of the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, and cites these Standards verbatim. These standards were developed by the U.S. Department of The Interior to guide federal agencies in dealing with historic properties and districts under their jurisdiction. Under Charlotte's local ordinance, the HDC is charged with developing specific policies dealing with issues relating to properties in Local Historic Districts, using the Secretary's Standards as a guide. This charge has led to the development of the policy statements contained in this manual.

In evaluating a project proposal, the Historic District Commission and its Staff refer to the adopted policies of the HDC for guidance, and also examine the specific context of the property in question. The policies in this manual are designed to address the more common issues that come before the Commission. However, some proposals are for projects that no specific policy addresses, and the HDC then turns to the Secretary's Standards for direction. The HDC also recognizes that each property in Charlotte's Local Historic Districts has unique qualities, and there are circumstances that warrant exceptions to their adopted policies. It is the responsibility of a property owner to demonstrate to the Commission that an exception is justified.

The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are listed on the following page. In order to deny an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, the Historic District Commission must find that the proposed project violates one or more of these standards.

If you have any questions regarding the Secretary's Standards or specific policy statements adopted by the Historic District Commission, please contact the Historic District Commission Office.

THE SECRETARY OF INTERIOR'S STANDARDS

The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Historic Rehabilitation (As cited in the *Charlotte Zoning Ordinance* Section 10.210)

- (a) A property shall be used for its historical purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
- (b) The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
- (c) Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
- (d) Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
- (e) Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
- (f) Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires the replacement of a distinctive feature, the new one shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.
- (g) Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historical materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
- (h) Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
- (i) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
- (j) New additions and adjacent or new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

APPEALS OF DECISIONS OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Any party aggrieved by a decision of the Charlotte Historic District Commission has the right to appeal the Commission's decision to the Charlotte Zoning Board of Adjustment. An appeal must be filed within thirty days of the decision of the Commission.

The ZBA will make a decision on the action of the Historic District Commission based on the record of the Commission meeting. The ZBA cannot consider information or testimony that was not available to the HDC at the Commission's meeting. The responsibility of the Zoning Board of Adjustment is to review the record of the meeting and determine if the Members of the Historic District Commission followed proper procedure in reaching a conclusion, and that the conclusion was supported by both the information before the HDC and current HDC policy.

After a ruling by the Zoning Board of Adjustment on an appeal of an Historic District Commission decision, the HDC and the appellant both have the right under state and local law to file an appeal from the ZBA to the Superior Court of Mecklenburg County.

Further details on the appeal process can be found in Section 10.213 of the Charlotte Zoning Ordinance. Call the Historic District Commission Office at 704-336-2302 for more information.

ELEVATION REQUIREMENTS

The Historic District Commission Staff will work with applicants to determine if detailed elevation drawings are required to adequately evaluate an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Consult with HDC Staff at 704-336-2302 to determine if elevations are required with an application and if a project is eligible for administrative approval.

- Drawings should not exceed 11" x 17" in size.
- If at all possible, an electronic copy of drawings and all supporting illustrations and photos should be submitted to HDC Staff ten days prior to the scheduled Commission meeting.
- If paper drawings are submitted, three copies are required.
- All elevations must be drawn to scale and properly labeled.
- All elevations must be complete. Incomplete elevations will not be forwarded to the full Commission for consideration.

- All materials must be noted.
- Elevation drawings must be submitted for all sides affected by the proposed work. In the case of small projects or rear additions, elevations can be submitted for only the elevations involved.
- Photographs and/or brochures for certain materials, such as replacement windows are required when necessary.

These submissions will be used by the Commission to determine whether or not project proposals meet the terms of the Charlotte Historic District Ordinance and current Commission policies. Requirements of the Mecklenburg County Land Use and Environmental Services Agency (LUESA) under current building code and zoning regulations must be met for all projects, regardless of any requirements of the Historic District Commission.



All final versions of plans going for full HDC review are due to the HDC office no later than TEN days prior to the HDC meeting where the case will be heard. Plans received later than this will not be forwarded to the Commission prior to the meeting, and will not be considered in any analysis HDC Staff prepares for the Commission prior to the hearing.

SITE PLAN REQUIREMENTS

For many projects, such as new construction, additions to existing buildings, parking plans, major landscaping, or other similar proposals, it will be necessary to provide the Historic District Commission with a detailed, scaled site plan of the property.

Consult with HDC staff at 704-336-2302 to determine if site plans are required with your application and if your project is eligible for administrative approval.

- Drawings should not exceed 11" x 17" in size.
- If at all possible, an electronic copy of drawings should be emailed to CharlotteHDC@CharlotteNC.gov. All drawings and supporting illustrations and photos should be submitted to HDC staff within ten days of the scheduled Commission meeting.
- If paper drawings are submitted, three copies are required.

Site plans must include all appropriate information, such as:

- *Existing features, including all building footprints, trees and major shrubbery, walks, driveways, curbs, signs, HVAC units, fences, curb cuts, dumpsters, etc.*
- *Side, front and rear yard setbacks*
- *Indication of existing features to be removed*
- *Indication of features which would be added to the site*
- *Accurate dimensions of existing and proposed site features, and their relationships to each other and to the site boundaries*
- *Fence and wall heights*
- *Buffers*
- *Parking requirements*
- *Screening of parking areas*

All site plans must be scaled or dimensioned from measurements of the site, not from estimates.

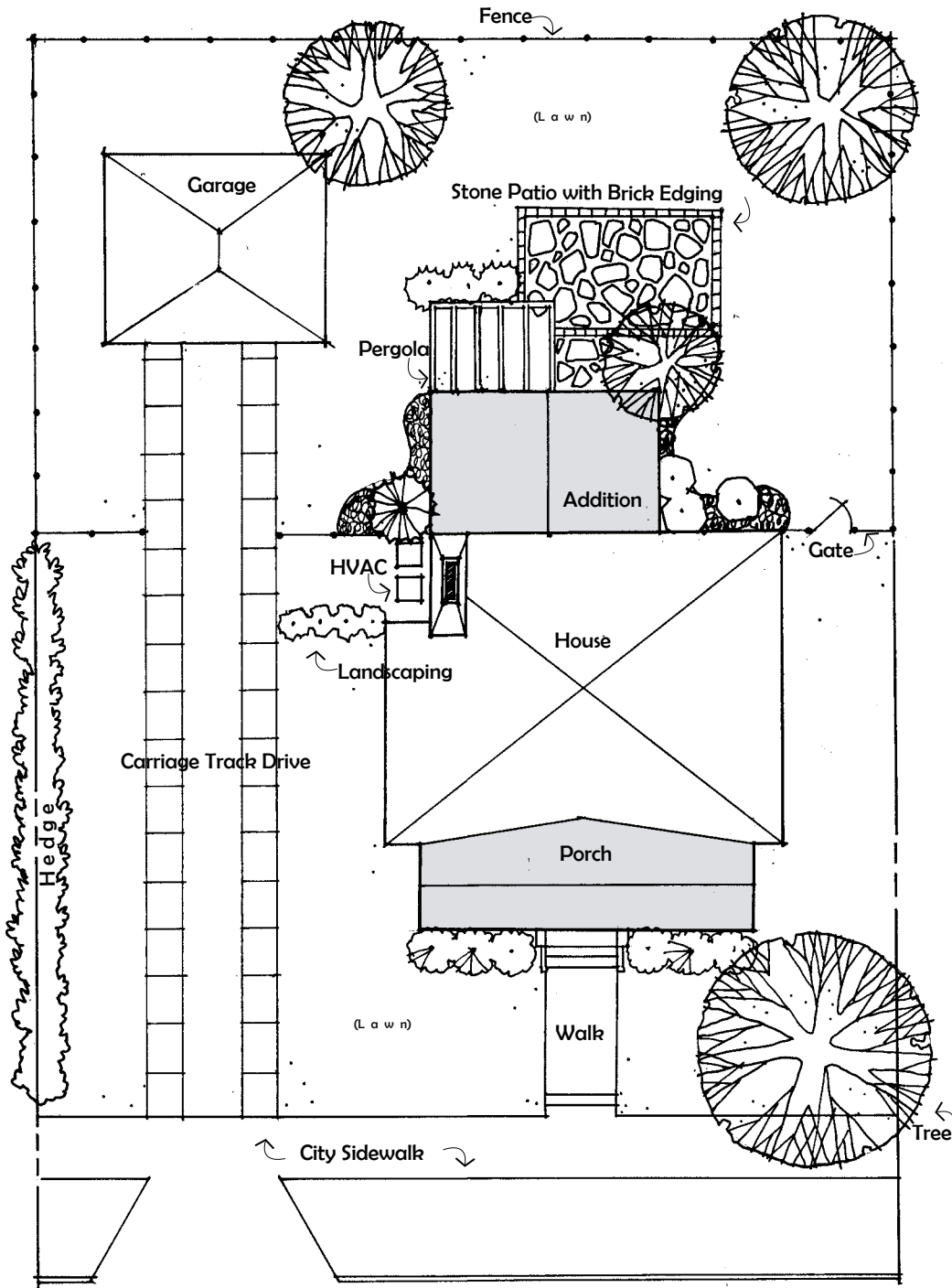
All site plans that include parking for commercial or multi-family projects must have preliminary approval from the Charlotte Department of Transportation and have approval under the Charlotte Tree Ordinance prior to submission to the Historic District Commission.

Site plans will be used by the Commission to determine whether or not project proposals meet the terms of the Charlotte Historic District Ordinance and current Commission policies. Requirements of the Mecklenburg Land Use and Environmental Services Agency (LUESA) under current building code and zoning regulations must be met for all projects, in addition to any requirements of the Historic District Commission.



All final versions of plans are due to the HDC office no later than TEN days prior to the HDC meeting where the case will be heard. Plans received later than this will not be forwarded to the Commission prior to the meeting, and will not be considered in any analysis HDC staff prepares for the Commission prior to the hearing.

Sample Site Plan



Scale required



III. Policy and Design Guidelines

PROJECTS ELIGIBLE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL

In order to avoid unnecessary delays for minor projects, the Charlotte Historic District Commission has made provision for administrative approval of the project types listed below, as long as the proposal meets current Commission policies.

The project types listed below are eligible for administrative approval by the Historic District Commission Staff, provided the proposal meets all relevant current policies adopted by the Commission. Staff has the discretion to refer any application to the full Commission for any reason.

- *Landscape & Site Features, including:*
 - Fencing
 - Retaining walls
 - Driveways
 - Walkways
 - Removal of small, dead and/or diseased trees
 - Backflow preventers

- *Work in Rear Yards, including:*
 - Additions to the rear of buildings that are neither taller nor wider than the existing structure
 - Decks
 - Patios
 - New rear yard accessory buildings and structures
 - Rear yard parking plans for non-residential uses

- *Replacement Windows & Doors, including:*
 - Single glass block windows on side or rear elevations
 - Changes in window and door openings on rear and side elevations not substantially visible from the street
 - Installation of storm windows and doors

- *Properly Documented Restoration Projects Consisting of Removal of Added Features*
- *Signage*
- *Properly Sited & Screened Mechanical Units*
- *Demolition of Dilapidated Accessory Structures*
- *Minor Changes, including:*
 - Shutters
 - Gutters
 - Handicapped access facilities on rear and side elevations
 - Removal of damaged or unstable secondary chimneys behind the roof peak as seen from the street
 - Porch rails
 - Installation of vent hoods

REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE

The Historic District Commission strongly holds that ordinary repair and maintenance projects do not require any review and approval, provided the work does not result in any changes in design or material. HDC Staff can determine if projects are true repair and maintenance, or if a Certificate of Appropriateness is necessary under the terms of the Charlotte Historic District Ordinance.

1. *True repair and maintenance projects do not require a Certificate of Appropriateness.*
2. *HDC Staff must be contacted before the commencement of a project, and Staff may use its discretion to determine whether or not a project is true repair and maintenance or whether the owner must file an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness.*

REPLACEMENT ROOFING

One of the most important aspects of building maintenance is ensuring that a structure has a sound roof. At the same time, the style and materials used on roofs can be one of the most basic elements in defining the style and character of a building. The policy statements below are designed to encourage owners to maintain roofs in their original styles and materials, while accommodating changes when warranted and when the change would not alter the overall style of a structure.

1. *A Certificate of Appropriateness is not required for re-roofing with in-kind materials.*
2. *If a change in materials is desired, Staff will use its discretion to determine whether a Staff approval is possible.*
3. *Specialty roofing materials such as slate, tile, or metal shingles are an integral part of a building's character, and a change to other materials could have an adverse affect on the property's integrity.*

WINDOWS AND DOORS

The placement and relationship of windows and doors are often critical parts of the style of a building. The demands of modern energy efficiency and security standards can lead owners of older buildings to consider replacement windows. These guidelines are designed to accommodate replacement windows in a manner that respects the original character of Local Historic District properties.

1. *All replacement doors and windows should retain the same configuration and details as the originals.*
2. *Replacing panes with stained, leaded, or beveled glass is potentially acceptable as long as the configuration remains the same and the new design does not conflict with the style of the building.*
3. *All replacement windows must have either true divided lights, or molded exterior muntins, if appropriate. Flat exterior or interior false muntins are not in keeping with the character of most older structures. Muntin design must reflect the original window configuration. False muntin bars, if used, will be permanently affixed to the exterior of the new windows.*
4. *Ideally, window and door openings cannot be reduced or enlarged in size. When approved, alterations to window and door openings must remain in proper proportion to the overall design of the building.*
5. *All newly installed and replacement windows must have proper trim that recognizes historic precedent on the building and its context.*
6. *Sensitively designed exceptions to these guidelines will be considered by the Historic District Commission when such proposals are intended to accommodate the adaptive reuse of older structures.*
7. *Glass block replacement windows are allowed only on side and rear elevations. Only one such change is allowable per elevation. Such windows are eligible for administrative approval if the window opening is not altered.*

Policy & Design Guidelines

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *A substantial, heavy weight entry is appropriate on large scale homes.*



- *Multi-panes are established with true divided lights.*



- *Highly stylized windows are only appropriate in limited applications.*



- *Muntin patterns are established on the exterior.*

Policy & Design Guidelines

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *New windows and doors reflect the original character of the property.*



- *Screen doors follow the shape of the door.*



- *This storm door configuration is the same as the primary door.*

STORM WINDOWS AND DOORS

Storm windows and doors can be an important part of the renovation of an older structure to modern living and energy standards. The principle behind the policies listed below is to accommodate the use of storm windows and doors in a manner that has minimal impact on the appearance of windows and doors, which are often some of the most distinctive features of a building.

1. *Storm windows and doors must be painted or clad to match or complement the trim of the structure. Any material is acceptable as long as it is clad or painted.*
2. *Storm doors should avoid obscuring the design of the front door.*
3. *Storm windows must be of a configuration that will not obscure the window behind.*
4. *Storm windows and doors must match the size of the existing windows and doors.*

SURFACE CLEANING

The cleaning of buildings can often help assure a longer useful life for a structure. However, some cleaning techniques, such as sandblasting, can often cause irreversible damage to the materials and details of buildings. Also, heat guns, heat plates and mechanical sanders can cause unintentional yet serious damage if used improperly. The guidelines listed below are designed to encourage the use of techniques that have proved effective while having little or no impact on the underlying materials.

1. *The Historic District Commission discourages abrasive cleaning techniques, such as grit or high-pressure water blasting and mechanical sanding.*
2. *Prior to using cleaning methods other than those listed below, property owners are strongly encouraged to consult with HDC Staff to help ensure that the correct method is chosen for the building materials involved.*
 - *Low-pressure water cleaning*
 - *Scrubbing with a brush and detergent*
 - *Hand sanding and scraping to remove paint*
 - *Gentle chemical washes*
3. *The need to correct damage caused by the use of improper cleaning techniques will not obligate the Historic District Commission to approve correction methods that otherwise violate HDC policy.*

PAINTING

The Historic District Commission does not regulate paint color, since colors are a matter of personal taste, and can be easily changed. However, the HDC does strongly encourage all Local Historic District property owners to use historically appropriate contrasts in their paint schemes.

1. *The selection of paint colors is considered to be a matter of choice for property owners, and has no bearing on the preservation of structures. Therefore, the Historic District Commission does not regulate the choice of paint colors. HDC Staff can provide advice on historic color choices if a property owner desires.*
2. *Only traditionally painted materials, such as wood, should be painted.*
3. *Foundations must be visually differentiated from the main body of the structure.*
4. *The painting of unpainted brick or masonry will require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Painting brick or masonry is not considered a change of color, but a fundamental change in the character of a building. The painting of brick or other masonry will not be permitted except in such special circumstances as:*
 - *The repainting of buildings first painted prior to the establishment of the appropriate Local Historic District.*
 - *Cases where a brick building has poorly matched additions or repair work, and where the painting is designed to unify the disparate parts of the building.*

Policy & Design Guidelines

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *Building elements are distinguished by a change of color.*



- *Building details can be articulated by color.*



- *Color is an individual choice.*

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *Parging can be an appropriate way to conceal extensive foundation repairs.*



- *Retaining walls were often parged in Charlotte's older neighborhoods.*



- *Parging was used here to mitigate previous problematic masonry repairs and to unify additions.*

PARGING

Often, the foundations and other masonry portions of older buildings are in poor shape and owners will seek ways of repairing these elements. One technique is parging: the covering of brick or block features with a coating of concrete or mortar to create a stucco appearance. Parging can be an effective way of masking the poor appearance of damaged masonry, but can also have a significant impact on the style and appearance of a building.

- 1. Parging any building or structure or any part of a building or structure in a Local Historic District will require a Certificate of Appropriateness.*
- 2. Parging will only be allowed by the Historic District Commission when the HDC determines it will not have a detrimental effect on the architectural style of the building.*

NEW CONSTRUCTION

New construction in Local Historic Districts has an obligation to blend in with the historic character and scale of the Local Historic District in which it is located. Designs for infill projects and other new construction within designated Local Historic Districts must be designed with the surroundings in mind. The Historic District Commission will not specify a particular architectural style or design for new construction projects. The scale, mass and size of a building are often far more important than the decorative details applied. However, well designed stylistic and decorative elements, as well as building materials and landscaping, can give new construction projects the attributes necessary to blend in with the district, while creating a distinctive character for the building. New construction projects in Local Historic Districts must be appropriate to their surroundings.

The Historic District Commission will review the building details for all new construction as part of their evaluation of new construction project proposals.

All New Construction Projects Will Be Evaluated For Compatibility By The Following Criteria	
1. Size	<i>the relationship of the project to its site</i>
2. Scale	<i>the relationship of the building to those around it</i>
3. Massing	<i>the relationship of the building's various parts to each other</i>
4. Fenestration	<i>the placement, style and materials of windows and doors</i>
5. Rhythm	<i>the relationship of fenestration, recesses and projections</i>
6. Setback	<i>in relation to setback of immediate surroundings</i>
7. Materials	<i>proper historic materials or approved substitutes</i>
8. Context	<i>the overall relationship of the project to its surroundings</i>
9. Landscaping	<i>as a tool to soften and blend the project with the district</i>

DEMOLITION

North Carolina Law (NCGS 160A-400.14.) states that the demolition of buildings and structures within Local Historic Districts requires the prior issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness. The policies listed below are designed to follow state law in a manner that minimizes the inconvenience to property owners when demolition is warranted, while affording as much protection as possible to structures that make valuable contributions to the character of Local Historic Districts.

1. No building or structure located within a Local Historic District can be demolished without a Certificate of Appropriateness.
2. The Historic District Commission will evaluate demolition applications to determine if the structure in question contributes to the character of the Local Historic District. If the HDC finds that the structure does not contribute to the character of the district or is unsalvageable, immediate approval of the demolition request may be granted.
3. Should the Historic District Commission find that the structure does contribute to the character of the historic district, the HDC can delay the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness authorizing demolition for a period not to exceed 365 days, in order to work with the owner to seek alternatives to demolition.
4. When an application for demolition receives a 365-day delay, any consideration of applications for proposed new construction on the same site will be deferred for 90 days.
5. When an application for demolition receives a 365-day delay, the Historic District Commission Staff will seek an alternative to demolition and will contact, within one month of the delay vote, the property owner who has applied for demolition, Historic Charlotte, Inc., and Preservation North Carolina to inform them of the threatened status of the building.
6. A permanent injunction against demolition can be invoked only in cases where a building or structure is certified by the State Historic Preservation Officer as being of statewide significance.
7. Applications for the demolition of dilapidated accessory structures may be eligible for administrative approval. All other demolition applications will be reviewed by the full Commission.
8. The maximum delay period for the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness authorizing demolition shall be reduced by the HDC where the Commission finds that the owner would suffer extreme hardship or be permanently deprived of all beneficial use or return from the property by virtue of the delay.



Any project that the Historic District Commission determines would require significant and substantial exterior demolition may, at the discretion of the Commission, be subject to the HDC policy on Demolition.

ADDITIONS

Additions to existing structures in Local Historic Districts have a responsibility to complement the original structure. Additions should reflect the design, scale and architectural style of the original structure. The following guidelines are intended to encourage addition designs that are compatible with the existing structure, while not fully mimicking the original design.

1. All additions will be reviewed for compatibility by the following criteria:	
a. Size	<i>the relationship of the project to its site</i>
b. Scale	<i>the relationship of the building to those around it</i>
c. Massing	<i>the relationship of the building's various parts to each other</i>
d. Fenestration	<i>the placement, style and materials of windows and doors</i>
e. Rhythm	<i>the relationship of fenestration, recesses and projections</i>
f. Setback	<i>in relation to setback of immediate surroundings</i>
g. Materials	<i>proper historic materials or approved substitutes</i>
h. Context	<i>the overall relationship of the project to its surroundings</i>

2. *Additions must respect the original character of the property, but must be distinguishable from the original construction.*
3. *All additions to the front or side of existing properties must be of a design that is sensitive to the character and massing of the existing structure.*
4. *Additions to the front or side of existing structures that are substantially visible from a street must go before the full Commission.*

continued

Policy & Design Guidelines

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *This house had undergone several unfortunate facade alterations.*



- *This facade restoration included porch addition and entry reorientation.*

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *An earlier rear addition did not respect the original character of this house.*



- *This replacement addition is more appropriately styled to the original house.*

Additions continuation

5. Additions to the rear of existing structures that are neither taller nor wider than the original structure may be eligible for administrative approval.
6. In a single-family use, no more than 50% of the rear yard can be of impermeable material, including the roofs of additions to original buildings, paving, decks, patios, and accessory buildings.



Any project that the Historic District Commission determines would require significant and substantial exterior demolition may, at the discretion of the Commission, be subject to the HDC policy on Demolition.

RESTORATION

In many cases, buildings and sites in Local Historic Districts have been altered over the years in ways that compromised their historic design. Often, photographic, physical or other evidence exists that can guide interested property owners in restoring a building's original appearance and character. The Historic District Commission wants to encourage and support property owners taking this approach.

1. In cases where properly documented restoration work consists of removing added elements to a building or site, the HDC Staff can grant administrative approval.
2. In cases where properly documented restoration work consists of adding removed elements to a building, the HDC policy on Additions and other relevant policies will apply.



Any project that the Historic District Commission determines would require significant and substantial exterior demolition may, at the discretion of the Commission, be subject to the HDC policy on Demolition.

SETBACK

A major element of the character of Local Historic Districts is the relationship of the buildings in the district to the street and to each other. These guidelines have been adopted by the Historic District Commission to help property owners and builders maintain this most important relationship.

1. *The established setback of a block shall be respected by new construction and by additions to existing structures. This requirement may be waived in areas where zoning districts are in place that are designed to restore historic urban development patterns. Applicants should consult with HDC staff to determine if an individual property is in such an area.*
2. *In most cases, setbacks must meet the requirements of the Charlotte Zoning Ordinance. However, the HDC may in some cases support a variance request by a property owner when the request is designed to preserve the existing historic streetscape. When a project is required to meet a “build to line” under the Charlotte Zoning Ordinance, the HDC will work to ensure that the historic built setback is respected.*
3. *Significant paving will not be allowed in the front setback.*
4. *In residential uses, setbacks must be clear of plantings and structures that obstruct the view of the main building on a property.*
5. *Whenever possible, parking for business, office and retail uses should be sited to the sides and rear of the main structure on a property. The HDC will consider the use of front parking when it is an established practice in commercial corridors, and when such a parking scheme would not otherwise violate the historic character of a particular streetscape. Any parking or paving plan must include a screening plan to buffer non-residential parking areas from adjacent residential uses.*

HANDICAPPED ACCESS FACILITIES

Properties in Local Historic Districts are not exempt from federal, state or local laws requiring that structures be made accessible to handicapped citizens. However, the Historic District Commission requires that careful attention be given to the design of such facilities. The goal is to meet the requirements of these laws and codes, while at the same time maintaining the character of the building and site.

1. *The ideal approach on most Local Historic District properties will be to place access ramps or other structures in the rear of the building.*

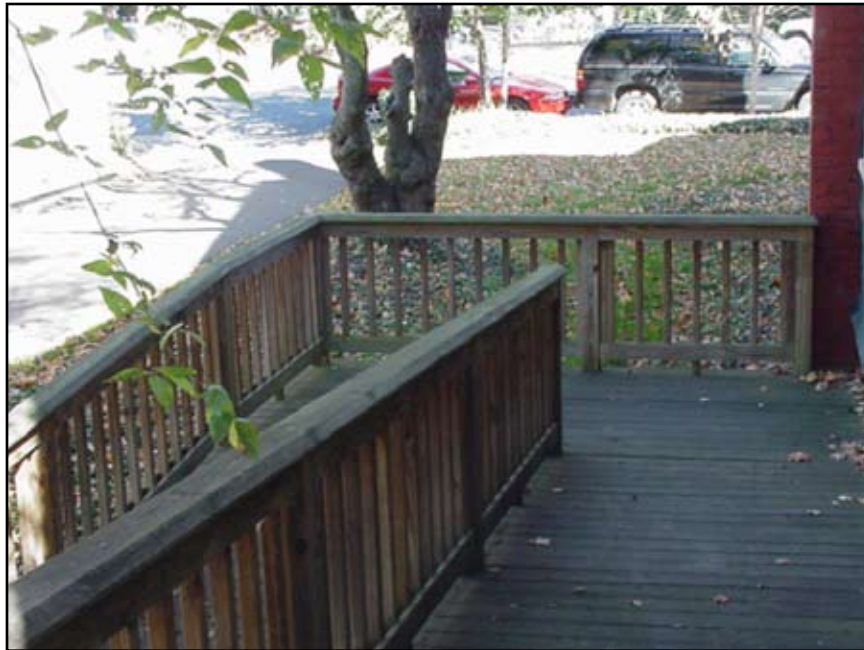
continued

Policy & Design Guidelines

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *New construction always respects existing setbacks.*



- *Appropriate access ramps are located unobtrusively and are simply detailed.*

Policy & Design Guidelines

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *A past porch enclosure eliminated the connection of this house to the street.*



- *The open porch was reestablished based on historic photographs of the house.*



- *Screened side porches may be appropriate if properly detailed.*

Handicapped Access Facilities continuation

2. *Any new ramps or other structures must be designed to be as unobtrusive as possible. Designs for these structures should be simple and clean.*
3. *Landscaping, the careful choice of building materials, and compatible color choices are all suggested ways of lessening the visual impact of handicapped access structures.*
4. *In lieu of a ramp, applicants should consider the use of mechanical lifts or other devices where feasible, as a less intrusive alternative.*
5. *The installation of handicapped access facilities should be done in a manner that is reversible.*
6. *If site conditions preclude an access ramp in a side or rear location, then the Historic District Commission will consider approval of a ramp on the front elevation of an existing structure. However, in such cases, the design of the ramp must be sensitive to the character and massing of the existing structure. All such approvals can only be granted by the full HDC.*

ENCLOSURE OF EXISTING PORCHES

Porches are an important part of the residential sections of older neighborhoods. The Historic District Commission strongly discourages porch enclosures in an effort to maintain the design integrity of both individual buildings and the overall streetscape in historic districts.

1. *All proposals for the enclosure of all or any part of a front, side or rear porch which are substantially visible from a street will be reviewed by the full Historic District Commission.*
2. *It is not appropriate to enclose a front porch or balcony on the front of an historic building. The full enclosure of a front porch is not allowed.*
3. *Front porch enclosures that reorient the entrance away from the street elevation of a building are not allowed.*
4. *Enclosure of side porches and balconies is discouraged. If enclosure of a side porch or balcony is required for a new use, the enclosure should be designed to ensure that the historic character and features of the porch are preserved.*
5. *All porch enclosures must be plausibly reversible. Permanent elements that could preclude the reversibility of the enclosed porch are not allowed.*

OTHER ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

There are certain parts of buildings that do not fall within the categories that have been outlined before, yet which are essential parts of the design and character of the building of which they are a part. The treatment of these features, includes such elements as chimneys, shutters, and gutters, can have a great impact on the contribution a structure makes to the character of a Local Historic District.

Chimneys:

1. *The removal or addition of any masonry chimney that is substantially visible from the street and that provides a strong contributing element to the character of the streetscape will be reviewed by the full Historic District Commission.*
2. *The removal or installation of vent hoods and other similar structures in commercial uses are eligible for administrative approval, provided the proposal otherwise meets Historic District Commission design criteria.*

Shutters:

1. *The historic structures in Local Historic Districts are all of the period that either had functional shutters or no shutters at all.*
2. *It is most preferable that buildings which historically never had shutters remain that way, and for properties that had shutters to have shutters that appear to be operable and that are made of an appropriate material.*
3. *The Commission may permit the application of inoperable shutters to Local Historic District buildings, should they be considered both appropriate for the building and of the appropriate size for the windows.*

continued

Policy & Design Guidelines

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *Primary chimneys are major design features.*



- *These shutters are appropriately sized to the window.*



- *Downspouts are located appropriately and gutters do not alter or obscure trim.*



- *Secondary chimneys can also be important design elements.*

Policy & Design Guidelines

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *Front porch rails are adequately trimmed.*



- *Some rails are an integral part of the architecture of the building.*



- *Rails are appropriately integrated with columns and piers.*

Other Architectural Features continuation

Gutters:

1. *The installation of seamless aluminum gutters and downspouts with a baked enamel finish does not require a Certificate of Appropriateness, as long as no alterations to the soffit and fascia are done as part of the installation. Otherwise, gutter installation will require administrative approval by HDC Staff.*
2. *Built-in gutters, which were common during the period when many of Charlotte's Local Historic District properties were built, are considered important design elements and should be repaired and preserved whenever possible.*
3. *All downspouts should be sensitively placed in order to be as unobtrusive as possible.*

Porch Rails:

1. *Porch rails must be of a design that is appropriate to the building.*
2. *New porch rails must be properly detailed for the architectural style of the building.*

Light Fixtures:

1. *Exterior light fixtures should be of a style and scale appropriate to the architecture and period of the building.*

BUILDING MATERIALS

One of the main components of a building's character is the material used in its construction. The weight and permanence of stone, the texture and shadow of wood, and the color and amount of glass are vital elements in many architectural styles.

Historically, wood has been the most common choice as a residential building material in Charlotte's older neighborhoods. The application of non-traditional siding materials over wood eliminates the scale, warmth and appearance of the original material, and also conceals the condition of the original structure, allowing for possible undetected decay or damage to occur.

Traditional Building Materials

- 1. The use of historically traditional building materials is strongly encouraged in all renovation, addition and new construction projects in Local Historic Districts.*
- 2. Historic precedents in the visual context of any project indicate appropriate choices for building materials.*
- 3. All building materials must match the character of the existing structure and/or the streetscape in design, texture and other visual qualities.*

Non-Traditional Building Materials

1. *The Historic District Commission considers substitute siding to be inappropriate for use in a designated Local Historic District, and does not allow its use on an historic structure within a Local Historic District.*
2. *The use of the following substitute siding materials is considered incongruous with the overall character of local historic districts, and is prohibited.*
 - *Vinyl*
 - *Aluminum or other metal sidings*
 - *Masonite*
3. *Cementitious board products are rarely considered appropriate for the main structure on a property. The Historic District Commission will consider these products on a case by case basis.*
4. *All proposals for the use of other non-traditional building materials for projects in Local Historic Districts will be judged on a case-by-case basis by the full Historic District Commission. The Commission will determine how well the proposed material and its proposed use are contextually appropriate in design, texture and other visual qualities.*
5. *The use of substitute or replacement building materials will not be considered as an alternative to routine maintenance.*

ACCESSORY BUILDINGS

Although the main building on a lot makes the strongest statement about a property's contribution to the character of a Local Historic District, the accessory buildings that share the lot can also have a significant impact on the streetscape. The Historic District Commission recognizes that many of the older support buildings throughout Charlotte's older neighborhoods are inadequate to meet the needs of today's families and businesses.



Any project that the Historic District Commission determines would require significant and substantial exterior demolition may, at the discretion of the Commission, be subject to the HDC policy on Demolition.

Garages:

1. *New garages cannot be located in front or side yards.*
2. *New garages must be constructed using materials and finishes that are in keeping with the main building they serve, and that are appropriate to the district.*
3. *Designs for new garages must be inspired by the main building they serve. Building details should be derived from the main structure.*
4. *Garages must be of a proper scale for the property, and must have an appropriate site relation to the main structure on a lot and to structures on surrounding properties.*
5. *Garage doors that are substantially visible from any street must be of a style and materials that are appropriate to the building and the district. Stamped metal and vinyl doors are considered to be inappropriate, and are discouraged.*

continued

Policy & Design Guidelines

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *Carriage styled garage entry enhances neighborhood character.*



- *This new garage is appropriately scaled to its surroundings.*



- *Single garages with carriage styled garage doors are appropriate accessory structures for most locations.*



- *Design and materials are derived from the main structure.*

Policy & Design Guidelines

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *Larger accessory buildings can be appropriate for large properties.*



- *Smaller accessory buildings are more appropriate for most single family homes.*



- *Simple accessory structure can be appropriate when properly sited and detailed.*

Accessory Buildings continuation

Other Accessory Buildings:

1. *Accessory buildings cannot be located in front or side yards.*
2. *Accessory buildings that are visible from the street must be constructed using materials and finishes that are in keeping with the main building they serve, and that are appropriate to the district.*
3. *Designs for accessory buildings must be inspired by the main building they serve. Building details must be derived from the main structure.*
4. *Accessory buildings and their placement must be of a proper scale in relation to the main structure on a lot, and to structures on surrounding properties.*
5. *Prefabricated accessory buildings can be used only in locations where they will not be substantially visible from any street or when they are judged to be appropriate to the site.*
6. *The HDC will give special consideration to the installation of accessory buildings in non-residential uses.*
7. *Doors of accessory buildings that are substantially visible from any street must be of a style and materials that are appropriate to the building and the district. Stamped metal and vinyl doors are considered to be inappropriate, and are discouraged.*

ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

The following guidelines have been developed by the Historic District Commission to accommodate modern conveniences in Local Historic Districts in a manner that has the least impact on the neighborhood's character. Property owners are encouraged to keep these guidelines in mind when planning the installation of satellite dishes, antennae, HVAC compressors and similar structures.

Satellite Dishes:

1. *Satellite dishes are not allowed in the front yard of any property in a Local Historic District.*
2. *Satellite dishes are allowed in side yards only where they can be adequately screened from the street in an appropriate manner.*
3. *Satellite dishes are allowed on the roofs of buildings only when the Historic District Commission finds that their placement will not have a negative impact on the character of the district.*
4. *Small-scale satellite dishes (no larger than 24 inches in diameter) can be placed in unobtrusive locations with administrative approval, as long as other relevant HDC design policies are met.*
5. *Property owners are encouraged to consider the smallest dish possible that can meet their technological needs.*
6. *Reception and feasibility concerns will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.*

Antennae:

1. *Antennae are permitted in Local Historic Districts.*
2. *The Members of the Historic District Commission and its Staff will work with property owners seeking antenna installation approval to determine an installation location that meets the technological needs of the owner while having the least impact on the district. Both parties will be responsible for working in*

continued

Accessory Structures *continuation*

good faith to find a balance between the needs of the applicant and the legal mandate of the Commission. The HDC cannot prohibit the installation of such antennae, but at the same time it is under no obligation to approve any antennae configuration or location brought before it that fails to meet the Secretary of Interior's Standards.

3. *Property owners are responsible for meeting all FCC regulations regarding signal interference with other properties.*
4. *Reception and feasibility concerns will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.*

Mechanical Units:

1. *Rear yards are the preferred location for mechanical units. Such locations are eligible for administrative approval.*
2. *Mechanical units are not allowed in the front yards of residential structures, unless the full HDC finds that there is no other technically feasible alternative. In such cases, a screening plan must be approved by the HDC prior to installation.*
3. *Mechanical units are allowed in side yards, but only if they are adequately screened from the street and adjoining properties in an appropriate manner.*
4. *The placement of above-ground backflow preventers in locations that are substantially visible from a street will require the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.*

Dumpsters:

1. *Dumpsters in Local Historic Districts should be screened on all four sides. The screening plans for dumpsters must be designed in accordance with current Historic District Commission policy on Fences and Landscaping.*

FENCES

The Historic District Commission considers fencing to be a major element in the character of a Local Historic District because of its often strong visual impact. Consequently, all fencing within a Local Historic District will require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Fences that meet these guidelines are eligible for administrative approval.

1. *Front yard or front setback fencing is restricted to low picket style fencing. On such fences, the height of the support posts should not exceed thirty-six inches above grade, and the height of the pickets should not exceed thirty inches. All pickets must be separated by a visible spacing pattern. All front yard fencing on residential uses must enclose three sides of the front yard. Front yard privacy fences are not allowed.*
2. *Fencing should not obscure the front elevation of the primary structure on a property. Also, fencing should not substantially obscure side elevations of the primary structure.*
3. *Fencing visible from any public street must be judged appropriate to the district. It must have texture resulting from an interplay of light and dark materials or solids and voids. Solid privacy fences that would be substantially visible from the street are not allowed.*
4. *The structural members of any fence must face inward to the property being fenced. The HDC will consider approving fences where the structural members are an integral part of a overall design, and where both sides of the proposed fence are identical.*
5. *Wooden fences must be painted or stained in an appropriate fashion.*
6. *No fencing may be over six feet in height, as measured from the outside at grade.*
7. *Fencing materials and details must be appropriate to the architectural style of the building they enclose. Proper fencing for a Victorian home can differ substantially from that appropriate to a Craftsman bungalow.*
8. *Fencing must avoid any style that presents a long unbroken expanse to adjacent properties or to public thoroughways.*
9. *All sides must be appropriately finished.*
10. *On corner lots on residential streets, privacy fences in rear yards must be screened with appropriate landscaping materials.*

Policy & Design Guidelines

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- Large houses require a fence with substantial elements.



- This fence design is derived from details found on the house.

- A simple picket styled fence is almost always appropriate.



- Rolled concrete retaining walls and picket style fences are typical in older neighborhoods.



- Horizontal / vertical laticework, and panels butt joined to sturdy uprights create a softened privacy fence.

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *The preservation of the tree canopy is vital to maintaining the character of an historic neighborhood.*

LANDSCAPING

Often, landscaping can have a significant effect on the character of a property, and therefore on the surrounding streetscape. However, the Historic District Commission also recognizes that yard design is easily changed, often with little impact on the overall character of an historic district. Consequently, the Commission has adopted these guidelines to deal with such major landscape elements as trees, walls and walkways. These guidelines do not apply to minor features such as azaleas and other small shrubs or flower beds.

Tree Removal:

1. *A Certified Arborist should be consulted in all applications regarding the removal of trees, and regarding the planting of trees when necessary. For full HDC review cases, a written recommendation from a Certified Arborist may be required.*
2. *The removal of dead or diseased trees will not require a Certificate of Appropriateness, provided a written assessment by a Certified Arborist is submitted to HDC Staff in advance, and that the HDC Staff judges that removal is justified. Otherwise, the removal request will be reviewed by the full Historic District Commission.*
3. *Trees in rear yards that are less than six inches in diameter may be removed with administrative approval.*
4. *Large healthy trees in rear and side yards that make a major contribution to the neighborhood tree canopy cannot be removed without the approval of the full Historic District Commission.*
5. *Front yard trees less than six inches in diameter may be removed with administrative approval. The removal of larger trees will require the approval of the full Commission, unless a written assessment by a Certified Arborist is submitted to HDC Staff in advance, and that the HDC Staff judges that removal is justified.*
6. *Where necessary, applicants are responsible for obtaining a tree protection plan approval from the Charlotte Engineering Department for new construction and additions, as required by the Charlotte Tree Ordinance.*

continued

Landscaping continuation

Landscaping Plans:

1. *All new construction projects will be required to submit a complete landscaping plan to the Historic District Commission for approval.*
2. *Landscaping must not obscure the main structure on a property from the street.*
3. *All landscaping required by other public agencies (such as required screening of parking lots) and changes to plantings previously required by the HDC for screening or mitigation will be reviewed by the full Historic District Commission.*

Landscape and Site Features:

1. *Inspiration for the design of these structures should be drawn from similar historic structures found in the Local Historic District.*
2. *Not all landscape structures are appropriate for every lot in the Local Historic District; a retaining wall is not suitable for a flat lot.*
3. *Historic precedents indicate appropriate materials such as stone, brick and concrete.*
4. *Historic site features are considered integral parts of Local Historic District properties, and cannot be removed without the review of the HDC or its Staff.*
5. *Walks and walkways in front and side yards or those that are substantially visible from the street should follow the historic design precedents of their environment.*
6. *Certain modern materials for landscape and site features are not allowed without the approval of the Historic District Commission.*
 - *Interlocking concrete block*
 - *Treated landscaping timbers*
 - *Railroad ties*
 - *Pre-fabricated lattice*

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *Site features should be repaired and retained when possible.*



- *Historically, retaining walls were no higher than necessary.*



- *Proper use of historically accurate materials blends new elements into the streetscape.*



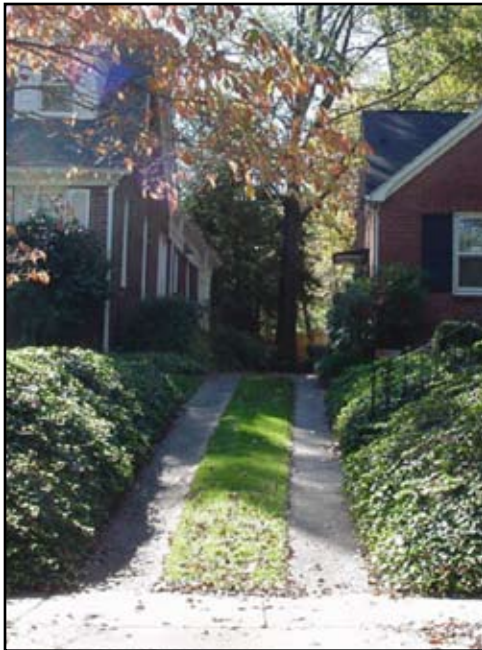
- *Carefully chosen materials can compliment older existing site features.*

Policy & Design Guidelines

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *An appropriate drive extends to the rear and is adequately landscaped.*



- *Carriage track drives provide historically accurate access with minimal paving.*



- *Replacement sidewalks ideally maintain connectivity with public sidewalk and curb.*

PARKING AREAS, PAVING, AND DRIVEWAYS

The Historic District Commission recognizes that present-day land use patterns require that parking often needs to be accommodated in places and in quantity that the original neighborhood design could not have anticipated. These policies are designed to strike a balance between the need to allow necessary parking for non-residential land uses, and to ensure that both residential and commercial parking plans have a minimum impact on the character of the area.

Parking Areas:

1. *Developed parking areas are not allowed in the front yard of residential uses.*
2. *Parking should be located to the side or rear of the property if at all possible.*
3. *Developed parking areas in the front setback of non-residential uses are not allowed unless all other attempts to meet code-mandated parking requirements are exhausted. When allowed, such parking areas must be buffered from the sidewalk.*
4. *Parking beyond that required by local ordinance will be considered if the area is landscaped and relates to the streetscape in an appropriate manner.*
5. *Parking must be screened in some manner so that the parking is not the dominant feature of the property.*
6. *All parking structures will be reviewed under HDC Policy & Design Guidelines for New Construction.*

Paving:

1. *In commercial, office, and other non-residential uses, the success of a parking plan will be judged primarily on how that plan relates to the subject property, adjacent properties, and the surrounding streetscape.*
2. *No paving materials are specifically prohibited by the HDC. The appropriateness of non-traditional or alternative paving materials and styles will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Asphalt paving is not allowed for sidewalks, curb cuts, and aprons.*
3. *In a single-family use, no more than 50% of the rear yard should be of impermeable material, including the roofs of additions to original buildings, paving, decks, patios, and accessory buildings.*

continued

Parking Areas, Paving, and Driveways continuation

Driveways:

1. *Driveways should be as narrow as possible. For properties in commercial, retail and office uses, the HDC Staff will work with Staff of the Charlotte Department of Transportation to coordinate the approval of a driveway design that meets the use needs of the property while following the historic design precedents in the immediate area.*
2. *In smaller-scale residential uses, driveways that stop at the original building façade are viewed by the HDC as front yard parking pads, and thus are prohibited. All driveways for residential uses should extend to at least the rear building line.*
3. *Driveways made of twin parallel tire tracks are considered important historic features and should be maintained where possible. Also, such driveways should be used in new construction where appropriate.*

REAR YARDS

Work done in rear yards of properties in Local Historic Districts can in some circumstances have an impact on the district. The Historic District Commission recognizes, however, that this is the exception rather than the rule. The guidelines listed below are intended to allow maximum flexibility in work limited to rear yards, while upholding the requirements of the Charlotte Historic District Ordinance.

1. *The Commission may allow Staff approval of work in rear yards that will not be substantially visible from a street. This includes fencing, landscaping, driveways, parking pads, decks, patios, pools and additions that are no wider than the present house and no higher than the original roof line.*
2. *In a single-family use, no more than 50% of the rear yard can be of impermeable material, including the roofs of additions to original buildings, paving, decks, patios, and accessory buildings.*
3. *Large, complicated or inappropriate projects may be brought to the full Historic District Commission at the discretion of the Staff.*

SIGNAGE

The Charlotte Historic District Commission recognizes that signage is necessary within Local Historic Districts. However, like other elements under the Commission’s jurisdiction, there is a responsibility to ensure that such signage respects the character of the Local Historic District where it is erected. The Commission strives to maintain signage policies that compromise neither the design qualities of the Local Historic District nor the ability of individual businesses to be successful. The Commission acknowledges the need to give signage applications careful consideration in order to avoid placing historic district businesses at a disadvantage. At the same time, business owners within the districts must realize that they have chosen to locate within some of the most attractive and sensitive areas of Charlotte, and that the City has a proven interest in maintaining certain design standards in these areas. Indeed, these locations alone can be a competitive advantage to many businesses.

The following provisions apply to all signs within Local Historic Districts. Where these regulations conflict with the City of Charlotte Sign Ordinance, the more restrictive provision will apply.

1. *All signs within Local Historic Districts will require a Certificate of Appropriateness.*
2. *All signs should be primarily for identification purposes.*
3. *All signs must visually relate to the building they serve. Only suitable materials, such as stone, wood, brick, and sturdy metals, will be approved.*
4. *Sensitively designed supports may, if approved, exceed the square footage restrictions listed below, but not the height restrictions.*
5. *Incidental signage, such as parking and entrance signs, require approval by the HDC or its Staff.*
6. *The HDC reserves the right to approve the placement of all signs on properties within Local Historic Districts.*
7. *The HDC will not exercise control over logos or color. It is strongly recommended that color schemes relate to the building the sign serves.*

continued

Signage continuation

8. *Property addresses should be clearly displayed either on the sign or on the building itself.*
9. *No off premise signs will be approved.*
10. *Signs may be lit with unobtrusive ground-mounted spotlights, or other unobtrusive lighting as the HDC may approve. Signs may not flash, blink, or glow from within.*
11. *Neon signs are permitted. Neon signs mounted inside windows can be installed without HDC approval, as long as they comply with the City of Charlotte Sign Ordinance.*
12. *Real estate signs will not require prior HDC approval, but should meet the other provisions of these regulations.*



*Any departures from signage plans for which a Certificate of Appropriateness has been issued must be **approved in advance** by the HDC. Failure to seek such prior approval will constitute a violation of the Charlotte Historic District Ordinance.*

Allowable signage size and height for Local Historic District properties will be determined by each property’s current land use zoning, as outlined below.

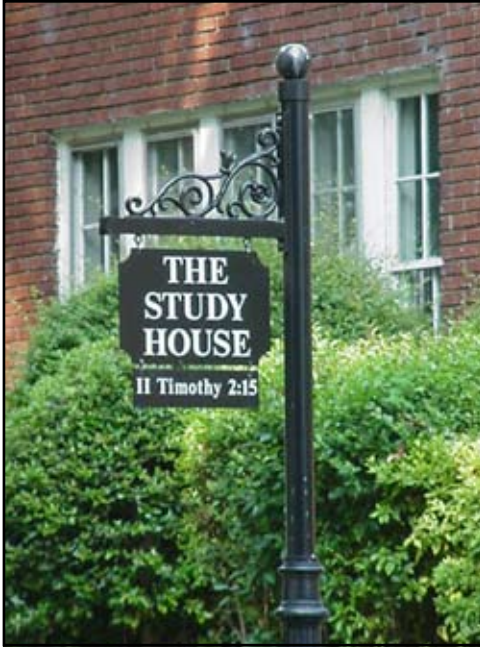
Within Residential Zoning Districts (R-5, R-22MF, R-4, UR-1, UR-2):

1. *For buildings primarily in a residential use, no sign shall exceed 1.5 square feet per side. For buildings primarily in allowable business uses, no sign shall exceed six square feet per side.*
2. *No sign shall exceed four feet in height.*
3. *Only one sign per property will be allowed.*
4. *Only one and two sided signs will be allowed.*
5. *Certain permitted non-residential uses, such as religious structures, schools and museums, may apply for larger signs, which shall be granted at the discretion of the HDC.*

continued

Policy & Design Guidelines

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- Home business signs are small, tasteful, and discrete.



- This signage was even incorporated into the building cornerstone.



- Certain non-residential uses may be granted larger signs.



- Exceptions to size may be justified by scale of building.

Policy & Design Guidelines

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *Additional landscaping relates a sign to its surroundings.*



- *Street address incorporates into signs.*



- *Additional square footage for multi-tenant use may be approved with an integrated signage plan.*



- *Appropriate materials include sturdy metal.*

Signage continuation

Within UR-3, UR-C, and UMUD Zoning Districts:

1. All single family residential uses must adhere to the Residential Zoning Signage Regulations.
2. All single tenant business uses must adhere to the following:
 - Only one sign per property will be allowed.
 - Only one and two sided signs will be allowed.
 - Free-standing signs will not exceed six square feet in area or six feet in height.
 - **Signs attached to buildings:** If a sign has a projection of six inches or less, it may be up to eight square feet in area. If the projection exceeds six inches, the sign may be no more than six square feet in area.

Within I-1 Zoning Districts:

1. No sign may exceed six feet in height or twelve square feet in area.

Within O-2, B-1, B-2, NS and Corridor Zoning Districts:

1. Signs should not exceed six feet in height or ten square feet in area.
2. Only one and two sided signs will be allowed.
3. In most circumstances, only one sign per property will be allowed. Businesses located on corner lots may request one sign per street frontage, but one frontage must be designated as secondary. On the secondary frontage, only one sign will be allowed, and that sign shall not exceed 1.5 square feet in area or three feet in height.
4. **Signs attached to buildings:** If a sign has a projection of six inches or less, it may be up to eight square feet in area. If the projection exceeds six inches, the sign may be no more than six square feet in area.

Multi-Tenant Business Properties Within All Zoning Districts:

1. Multi-tenant business properties are only allowed one sign per street frontage, under the provisions of The Charlotte Sign Ordinance. Therefore, applications for signage for such

continued

Signage continuation

properties must be coordinated by the owner of the property or their agent. The HDC will under no circumstances mediate a dispute between tenants regarding signage allotments.

2. *Signs should not exceed ten square feet in area per side or six feet in height. For non-residential multi-tenant properties, the HDC will consider designs that exceed the area restrictions by no more than 25%. The height restrictions cannot be exceeded.*

Planned Multi-Family Developments in All Zoning Districts:

1. *Planned multi-family developments must submit a unified signage plan to the HDC for approval. No plans will be approved that do not follow the general intent of these regulations. The main sign for such developments must recognize the zoning district in which the development lies.*

Non-Conforming Signs:

1. *Existing signs that are non-conforming under these regulations shall be made conforming upon any change if such change requires a change in existing signage.*

ENFORCEMENT

There are three circumstances that can lead to the commencement of enforcement procedures against a property owner within a Local Historic District:

1. *Work is done that requires a Certificate of Appropriateness without a Certificate being issued.*
2. *Certificate of Appropriateness is denied by the Historic District Commission, and the project is carried out in defiance of the denial.*
3. *Work is approved by the Historic District Commission or Staff, and is then carried out in a manner inconsistent with the approval.*

When one of these circumstances exists, the following procedure will be followed:

1. *Commission Staff shall make an effort to contact the property owner by mail, seeking voluntary compliance with the ordinance. The property owner will be given 30 days to contact HDC Staff and begin corrective action.*
2. *If the property owner contacts the HDC Staff and corrects the violation through established HDC procedures, no further action will be taken.*
3. *If compliance is not achieved by HDC Staff, the matter will be referred to the City of Charlotte Zoning Enforcement Staff. HDC Staff may consult with the Commission prior to this step if Staff feels the violation is unclear under current HDC policy.*
4. *HDC Staff will provide to the relevant Zoning Enforcement Supervisor the violation to be cited, and the address and owner of the property where the violation has occurred.*
5. *Zoning Enforcement Staff will then pursue the violation through the processes outlined in Chapter 8 of the Charlotte Zoning Ordinance.*
6. *Should the violation be corrected through established HDC procedures, HDC Staff will notify the relevant Zoning Enforcement Supervisor to suspend or end their enforcement process on the violation in question.*

DETAILS

Historically, architecture and design has consisted of two components – form and detailing. Form is the way buildings are shaped, how the large sections are assembled to create the basic style of a home or a business. Detailing further refines the overall design of a building, often making the major determination of what architectural style the building falls under. For example, Victorian architecture includes what we often think of as the classic American farm house, but also includes the very ornate decoration of the Queen Anne style. A plain farmhouse from 1900 and a classic turreted Queen Anne house from the same period can have similar forms, but can differ drastically in their detailing.

The following pages show a wide variety of details from buildings in Charlotte's Local Historic Districts. Well designed detailing can go a long way toward making an addition to a building look appropriate to the neighborhood and the Local Historic District, and can also help infill construction better blend into an existing streetscape.

Policy & Design Guidelines

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *Original, elaborately detailed homes exist in each historic neighborhood.*



- *Different materials and applications provide a visual layering.*



- *Shingles may be applied in many historically accurate configurations.*



- *Shingles create many different patterns and are often interchangeable with other appropriate forms of siding.*

Policy & Design Guidelines

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *Details define the distinctiveness of each house.*



- *Whether simple or highly detailed, individual architectural elements are to be preserved.*

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



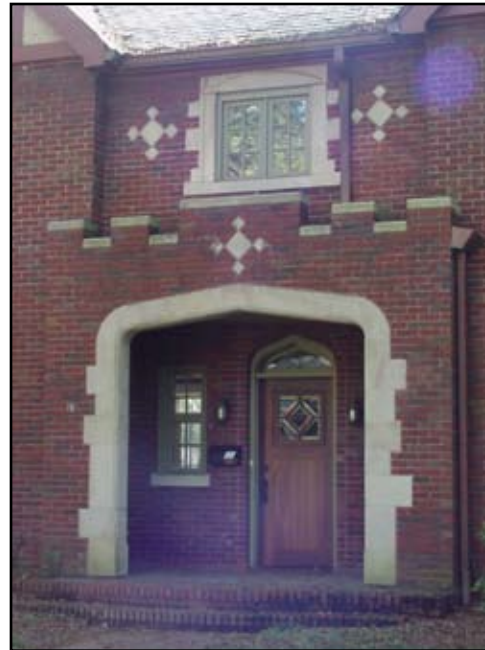
- *Distinctive stick work is a detail appropriate only to the High Victorian style.*



- *Details give buildings their individuality.*



- *Well-designed detailing gives buildings a unique character.*



- *Decorative masonry detailing is often an integral part of the structure.*

Policy & Design Guidelines

Architectural elements are appropriate within individual context and not necessarily or always interchangeable from house to house or neighborhood to neighborhood.



- *Dormers provide a way to gain height and light into a second floor while preserving a 1 or 1 1/2 story facade.*



- *Shed dormers can minimize perceived building mass.*



- *Other appropriate dormers are small and relate explicitly in style and materials.*



- *In some instances larger dormers may be appropriate.*

CHARLOTTE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

FINAL PLAN SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

Contact HDC Staff to determine the materials necessary to review your application.

REQUIRED MATERIALS FOR ALL APPLICATIONS:

- ✓ Completed application form. Describe clearly and in detail the nature of the proposed project. Attach additional sheets if necessary.
- ✓ Photographs of site and existing conditions. Photographs should be labeled with the property address and the date the photograph was taken. Digital format is acceptable.

NECESSARY DOCUMENTATION MAY ALSO INCLUDE:

- Detailed elevations including notes, dimensions and building materials showing both existing and proposed conditions.
- Site plan with dimensions showing both existing and proposed conditions. Include buildings, additions, sidewalks, drives, trees, property lines, and fences/walls where applicable.
- Streetscape photographs showing the context of the proposed project by plugging it into the streetscape.
- Indication of proposed tree removal and/or tree planting.
- Landscape plans indicating major plant materials and site features. Indicate significant changes of grade.
- Indication of any planned demolition.
- Material samples where applicable.
- Other documentation as indicated by HDC staff.

PLAN SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

- **3 copies of Site Plan & Elevations, not to exceed 11 x 17**
- **Drawings and other materials may be submitted electronically to:**

CharlotteHDC@CharlotteNC.gov

Although attendance by applicants at Historic District Commission meetings is optional, it is STRONGLY ADVISED that applicants make every effort to attend. Failure to attend can result in the denial or delay of an application due to incomplete information.

I, the undersigned, certify that all information in this application and in any attachments is accurate to the best of my knowledge. Furthermore, I understand that, should the Charlotte Historic District Commission issue this Certificate of Appropriateness, that Certificate will be valid for a period of six months from the date of issuance. Failure to procure a building permit within that period will be considered as failure to comply with the Certificate and the Certificate will become invalid. If a building permit is not required, then the authorized work must be completed within six months. Certificates can be extended for six months prior to their expiration by requesting an extension in writing from Historic District Commission Staff.

Applicant

Date

When online click on **Links** below
for Historic District Commission information
and additional links to other pertinent information.

www.charlotteplanning.org





*Charlotte Historic District Commission
600 East Fourth Street
Charlotte, North Carolina 28202-2853
704-336-2302
704-336-5994
704-336-2205
CharlotteHDC@CharlotteNC.gov*