

PRESERVATION: 2017

*Report to the Mayor
City of Knoxville*



Presented to:
Knoxville-Knox Metropolitan Planning Commission
April 12, 2018

Knoxville City Council
May 8, 2018

2017 Historic Zoning Commissioners

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Cover illustration compliments of Rick Dover, developer and owner of Knoxville High School

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State of Historic Preservation in the City of Knoxville 2017

Executive Summary

The City's Charter, as amended in 2002, requires that an annual report on the state of historic preservation within the City of Knoxville be reviewed by the Metropolitan Planning Commission and presented to the City Mayor.

This purpose of this report is to convey the current state of historic preservation efforts and activities within the city and to report wins as well as losses. The topics covered include initiatives in historic preservation, recommendations for implementation of preservation initiatives, and Historic Zoning Commission activity.

Historic Preservation Initiatives 2017

Edgewood-Park City Historic Zoning Overlay District Expansion Proposal

Public outreach for the expansion area and design guidelines update was initiated by MPC on January 19th at the O'Connor Senior Center with approximately 105 stakeholders in attendance. Those who supported the proposal expressed concern over further loss of historic character and smaller houses through demolitions and inappropriate additions. Those who were opposed to the proposal expressed concern that higher costs would be associated with materials, labor, property taxes, and permit fees, resulting in a loss of cultural and housing diversity in the neighborhood. In order to address cost concerns, following are some of the provisions that were submitted with the expansion proposal:

- reduction of administrative Certificate of Appropriateness fees
- Knox Heritage assistance in paying fees
- allow existing materials such as vinyl to be replaced with the same
- no review for projects that aren't viewable from the public-right-of way
- no review for utility items or fencing
- no review of small accessory structures
- discounts on materials at Knox Heritage Salvage Shop
- recommendations on ways to reduce renovation costs

Following is a list of 2017 of MPC public outreach efforts for the proposed Edgewood-Park City H-1 expansion area, as well as for the existing H-1 district's design guidelines updates:

January 19th, 2017 – MPC-sponsored meeting at O'Connor Senior Center

NOTE: For MPC-sponsored meetings on January 19th and February 17th, 2017, a press release was sent out. Mailed notices were sent to each property owner for both meeting. Both meetings were posted on the MPC website. The January 19th meeting was covered by WATE and WBIR, and the video of the meeting was made available by CTV on their website. It was also featured in the Knoxville Office of Neighborhoods Newsletter. The Knoxville Focus ran an article about the January 19th meeting on January 18th and 29th.

January 26th, 2017 – MPC-sponsored January 19th meeting – video posted on CTV website and Edgewood Park City facebook page

January 30th, 2017 – Link to January 19th meeting summary on MPC's webpage posted on Edgewood-Park City facebook page.

February 17th, 2017 – MPC-sponsored Open House at O'Connor Senior Center (Questions & Answers about the expansion and design guidelines)

March 6th, 2017 – PCO Community meeting, Cansler YMCA

(Discussion on design guidelines and contributing and noncontributing properties; City Council member Brown attended)

March 14th, 2017 – MPC staff presentation to City Council at pre-meeting
(Discussion on status of boundaries, design guidelines and gentrification studies)

March 16th, 2017 – Knox News Sentinel Article on the expansion proposal

May 11th, 2017 – MPC / Knox Heritage-sponsored Community Meeting. Cansler YMCA

June 29th, 2017– MPC / Knox Heritage co-sponsored Design Guidelines Workshop at the Cansler YMCA
from 6-9pm. Invitation sent out June 15th to existing H-1 and expansion area owners via UPS and Parkridge e-mail list invitation on both June 15th and 19th. Posted to MPC website main page, in City Community Development Neighborhood Newsletter, and the Parkridge Community Organization Facebook page. Press release sent out by MPC. Powerpoint slides were presented followed by a comment period.

July 11th 2017– Meeting summary and Design Guidelines update posted to MPC website

All of the following public meetings, with the exception of the City Council meetings, were posted on the MPC website, the Parkridge facebook page, in the Knox News Sentinel, and e-mailed notices were sent out. Mailed notices were sent out for the MPC meeting, including two notices to adjoining property owners.

August 17th, 2017 – Historic Zoning Commission public input meeting, 8:30 a.m., Small Assembly Room, City-County Building. HZC voted to recommend approval of the H-1 expansion to City Council and to postpone vote on the design guidelines to September 21st HZC meeting.

September 13th, 2017 – Design Guidelines community input meeting, co-sponsored by Knox Heritage and MPC at the Cansler YMCA from 7-9pm.

September 21st, 2017 – Historic Zoning Commission public input meeting, 8:30 a.m., Small Assembly Room, City-County Building. HZC voted to recommend approval of design guidelines.

October 12th, 2017 – Metropolitan Planning Commission public meeting, 1:30 p.m., Main Assembly Room, City-County Building. MPC voted to recommend approval to City Council.

November 7th, 2017 – City Council public hearing, 6:00 p.m. Main Assembly Room, City-County Building. City Council voted to approve the H-1 expansion and the design guidelines.

November 21st, 2017 – City Council second reading, 6:00 p.m. Main Assembly Room, City-County Building. City Council voted to postpone the vote on the H-1 expansion and the design guidelines until May 22nd, 2018 in order to consider alternatives to the H-1 overlay proposal.

MPC Historic Preservation Action Items for 2018:

- Study potential establishment of a historic or neighborhood conservation zoning overlay for the Oakwood Neighborhood
- Continue to receive public input for and finalize the update of the Design Guidelines for the Old North Knoxville Historic District Overlay
- Update the historic preservation zoning code through the Re-code effort – proposal for codifying a requirement for a pre-application review for infill construction

Actions in Progress to Implement Recommendations for 2018:

- Reconnaissance survey to identify study area for potential establishment of Oakwood historic or neighborhood conservation overlay. Neighborhood input meeting scheduled for April 30th, 2018
- Create template for introductory chapters and illustrations for design guidelines updates

Historic Zoning Commission Design Review

In 1991, residents of Mechanicsville joined forces to create the city’s first residential H-1 historic district overlay. Old North Knoxville followed suit in 1992. The establishment of those districts were followed shortly thereafter with those for the Fourth & Gill, Edgewood-Park City and the Market Square historic districts. Another form of overlay zoning, designed to protect historic buildings from demolition and assure new construction is compatible with the existing, is called a *Neighborhood Conservation Overlay* (NC-1) which designates the Tazewell Pike, Scenic Drive, Fort Sanders, Fairmont Park, and Gobbler’s Knob/Sherrod Road districts.

The Knoxville Historic Zoning Commission (HZC) and MPC staff reviewed 92 requests for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) over the calendar year 2017. Within the 4th & Gill and the Old North Knoxville H-1 overlays, which consistently lead in COA requests, applications have fluctuated over the last five years. In the Edgewood-Park City H-1 Overlay, the number of requests for COAs has totaled between 9 and 12 over the last five years but for the year 2017, the number of COA requests rose to 17.

HZC Certificate of Appropriateness Reviews

| <u>DISTRICT</u> | <u>COAs</u> |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| 4 th & Gill H-1 | 27 |
| Old North Knox H-1 | 27 |
| Edgewood-Park City H-1 | 17 |
| Fort Sanders NC-1 | 7 |
| Individual Landmarks H-1 | 6 |
| Fairmont-Emoriland NC-1 | 3 |
| Mechanicsville H-1 | 2 |
| Scenic Drive NC-1 | 2 |
| East Jackson Avenue H-1 | 1 |
| | 92 Total |



The Knaffl-Stephens House in its later location at 3738 Speedway Circle

The City of Knoxville took possession of this house in November 2017 in attempt to halt its demolition by neglect. The Community Development Department is marketing the house under the authority of the Homemaker's Program. The Knaffl-Stephens House was built in 1880 at 918 Gay Street for artist Joseph Knaffl. In c. 1926, James Stephens, a steel contractor, relocated the house to 3738 Speedway Circle to allow for the construction of the Andrew Johnson Building.



Postcard photo of the Farragut Hotel Building by Thompson's, Inc.

The former Farragut Hotel Building, built in 1917, re-opened on December 19th, 2017 as the Hyatt Place Regency Hotel. The restoration and refurbishment of the hotel was orchestrated by developer Rick Dover. The historic entrance awning was replicated using period photographs as a guide. Local architect Faris Eid of DIA partnered with an Atlanta firm to restore the building to its early grandeur. The City assisted with a payment in lieu of taxes agreement which freezes property taxes at the current rate for 25 years. The city also granted the use of 160 parking spaces in the State Street Garage for the hotel's use, for which the hotel will pay the full rate.



The 1876 McKee Hall Administration Building

In 2017, college staff were required to vacate the Alumni Library and the historic McMillan Chapel after city officials deemed them unsafe for habitation. The A.K. Stewart Science Building also had environmental issues due to unlabeled hazardous chemicals in the vacant building. Classes had ceased in 2015. The City has had discussions on collaboration with the college to support the renovations in any way feasibly possible. A majority of the campus remains in disrepair, but repairs have been made more recently to the College Annex. The college has a goal of re-opening for classes by 2019.



Historic Knoxville High School 2016 – pre-renovation

The exterior of the historic school building has been meticulously restored and a public tour of the completed interior renovation was offered by developer Rick Dover on February 28th, 2017. In 2014, the county-surplus building was sold to Dover Development Group following a request for proposals. The corporation has carefully converted into an independent senior living facility offering the lease of 80 units with multiple building amenities. The building served as Knoxville High School from 1910 to 1951. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, making the project eligible to take advantage of the federal income tax credit for certified rehabilitation of historic buildings. The building is also protected with an H-1 zoning overlay. This fruition of this project represents one of 2017’s best preservation success stories.

