

Project Narrative FFY2019

Addendum to *Design Standards & Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone: Modern Materials & Technologies*

The City of Dover is proposing a preservation planning project to evaluate and update portions of the *Design Standards & Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone* document. The result of the project will be a Draft Addendum document focusing on modern and technological advancements in materials and construction activities of items discussed in the *Design Standards & Guidelines*.

The current *Design Standards & Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone* document was created¹ and adopted in 1992-1993 with the formal establishment of the City's Historic District Commission (HDC) by ordinance adopted July 26, 1993. The ordinances of the City of Dover allow for the designation and protection of historic properties. The purpose of Historic District regulations is:

“to preserve and enhance that unique character and value of the old portion of Dover as an area of special charm and interest. It is particularly intended that the regulations prevent, in the historic district, any change of conditions that would be deemed to be a disfigurement or degradation of the present unique visual and architectural qualities of the district.” (*Zoning Ordinance*, Article 3, Section 21)

The geographic boundaries of the Historic District (H) zone are established as a zoning classification. The original boundaries of the Historic District established in 1961 were generally described as extending from just north of Division Street south to South Street inclusive of the properties fronting on South State Street and The Green then east to the St. Jones River. In 1997, the boundaries of the Historic District Zone were expanded to include properties fronting on West Loockerman Street from Bradford Street to the railroad corridor and areas in the vicinity of South Governors Avenue, South Bradford Street, North Street, and Bank Lane. The areas of expansion included many commercial and residential properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Victorian Dover Historic District. See attached *Map of City of Dover Historic District* showing the current boundaries (shaded in orange).

As a preservation and redevelopment tool, the *Design Standards and Guidelines* provide guidance for property owners, design professionals, staff and the Historic District Commission (and Planning Commission). The “historic district design guidelines and standards” are defined by the *Zoning Ordinance* as follows:

“*Historic district design guidelines and standards*: The document adopted by the City of Dover Planning Commission as being the source reference document for construction and maintenance of buildings, structures, and additions with the Dover Historic District and which is the guiding document for the historic district commission and city planner in their review of applications for architectural review certification.”

Therefore, it is utilized as a guiding document in the decision making process of reviewing of construction activities in the Historic District zone for issuance of Architectural Review Certification (*Zoning Ordinance*, Article 10 Section 3). Applications for Architectural Review Certification are reviewed by the City Planner (Staff), the Historic District Commission, and Planning Commission. See the following code excerpt regarding the architectural review standards.

¹ The current document *Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone* was prepared in 1992 by John Milner Associates Inc. with funding by a grant from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior and administered by the State Historic Preservation Office. City Planning Staff, the State Historic Preservation Office, the Friends of Old Dover, Main Street Dover, and other interested parties participated in the development of the document.

Zoning Ordinance, Article 10 Section 3.25 Architectural review standards.

- (A) An architectural review certificate may be issued if it is found that the architectural style, general design, height, bulk and setbacks, arrangement, location and materials and structures affecting the exterior appearance are generally in harmony with neighboring structures and complementary to the traditional architectural standards of the historic district as set forth in the historic district design guidelines and standards adopted by the planning commission and as set forth in the United States Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- (B) The city planner, historic district commission or planning commission shall not consider normal maintenance and repair (see definitions, article 12), interior arrangement, or building features not subject to public view.

The *Zoning Ordinance* references the *Design Standards & Guidelines* when establishing the Architectural Review Certification process for the City of Dover's Historic District zone (H). An Architectural Review Certificate is required for a demolition, erection, reconstruction, alternation, restoration or exterior repairs on properties within the Historic District. Most projects within the Historic District are eligible for administrative review of the Architectural Review Certificate as part of the Building Permit process for such projects as signs, roof and door or window replacement, and exterior finish/siding/trim work renovations. Project activities only involving interior renovations are not subject to the Architectural Review Certification process. For example, in calendar year 2018, a total of forty-seven (47) applications (permit activity in the Historic District) were reviewed under this process with 38 Permits requiring Architectural Review Certification and 9 Permits not requiring Architectural Review Certification.²

Historic Preservation Planning is part of a comprehensive approach to land use planning in the City of Dover. In Dover's current plan, the *2008 Comprehensive Plan (as amended)* this information is presented in Chapter 6 - Historic Preservation and associated Map 6-1. The *2008 Comprehensive Plan* includes sets forth goals and a series of recommendations for each goal. The Historic Preservation Goals are as follows:

Historic Preservation	Goal 1: Preserve and Protect Historic Resources Goal 2: Provide and Promote Incentives for Preservation Activities Goal 3: Increase Public Information on Historic Resources Goal 4: Collaborate with Diverse Groups and Governments
------------------------------	---

2008 Comprehensive Plan, excerpt from Table 1-1: Plan Chapter Goals

To achieve Goal 1, one of the adopted Recommendations was the Evaluation of Design Standards and Guidelines since the original document was adopted in the early 90s. The recommendation also suggested consideration of the standards and guidelines for the levels of protection for The Green and the Loockerman Street areas.

For this project for an Addendum to the *Design Standards & Guidelines*, the City of Dover will seek to hire a consultant through a Request for Professional Services process to assist the Historic District Commission and Planning Staff with the project. The consultant will be required to have a Principal Investigator (PI) who meets the professional qualification standards in 36 CFR 61. Also involved in the project, the Historic District Commission consists of five (5) appointed members and the Planning Commission³ consists of nine (9) appointed members. The Planning Staff serves as staff support to the Historic District Commission and will manage the activities of this project.

² The volume of Permit Activity in the Historic District over the past five years has averaged 52 applications a year with a majority of them eligible for Architectural Review Certification review by Staff.

³ The Planning Commission, per the *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 10 Section 3.25(A), is involved in the formal adoption process for the Historic District guidelines.

With the project, we hope to create an Addendum to the *Design Standards & Guidelines* that focuses on the modern and technological advancements in materials and construction activities. In recent years, the use and role of alternative and composite materials in construction has increased with options for wood composites, PVC/vinyl products, and others. In addition, features like solar panels and other conservation related measures have become more common place. This Addendum will focus on these types of materials and items as associated with the practices for maintenance, preservation and construction activities within the Historic District. Components of the Addendum document will continue to provide guidelines for treatment of historic properties and features focusing on maintenance, repair, alternations, and preservation or restoration of existing buildings; guidelines for new construction activities (additions and new buildings), guidelines for demolition activities; guidelines for landscaping and site elements, and guidelines for signage. The document is to be consistent with the *Secretary of Interior Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties (Rehabilitation Standards and Guidelines)*.

The project will consist of a series of phases: Planning, Public Outreach, Guidelines Revision and Refinement, and Preparation of Draft Addendum Document. The following chart outlines the anticipated activities of the project.

Timeframe	Project Phase	Activities and Products
September 2019	Consultant Services	Develop RFP and release. Select Consultant
September – October 2019	Planning	Meetings with Consultant, Staff and HDC to outline general project approach, goals and format for Addendum guidelines, determine public input strategy.
November 2019 – January 2020	Public Outreach	Analysis of guidelines. Conduct focus groups/stakeholder meetings and a Public Workshop.
January 2020 – April 2020	Guidelines Revision & Refinement	Prepare example page format (text and photographs). Meetings with Staff and HDC to present drafts. Review of multiple Drafts by Staff, HDC.
May 2020 – June 2020	Preparation of Draft Addendum Document	Conduct Public Workshop on Draft. Review of Draft by State Historic Preservation Office.

The specific scope of work, tasks, and deliverables by the consultant will be further refined with Planning Staff. Electronic copies of documents are anticipated for use at meetings and posting on the City's website for review. Subject to the selection of the consultant, the Project's work timeframe is expected to be September 2019 through June 2020 with the formal review process to adopt the Draft Addendum Document to follow in Summer 2020 with the Historic District Commission and Planning Commission.