

RESOLUTION NO. R-2122-58

ITEM NO. 14

STAFF REPORT

ITEM: A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, ADOPTING THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION GUIDELINES TO BE USED BY THE NORMAN HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION IN REVIEWING PROPOSED ADDITIONS, ALTERATIONS, AND DEMOLITIONS TO STRUCTURES LOCATED IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICTS.

BACKGROUND:

After more than 10 years of use, the Historic District Commission found both the 2008 Preservation Guidelines and 2009 Historic Preservation Handbook were in need of revisions. The following areas were identified as needing to be addressed: corrections of errors and omissions; development of new layout for the handbook resulting in a user-friendly document for citizens, Commission and staff; incorporation of the Southridge District; expansion of proposed work approvable by Administrative Bypass review and the creation of standards for those Bypass items; clarification of routine maintenance and repair items; creation of guidelines addressing energy efficiency requests (windows and solar); and revisions to the guidelines for parking, windows, doors and additions.

The City Council on August 12, 2008 adopted by resolution a set of Historic Preservation Guidelines. The newly adopted Preservation Guidelines were then incorporated by staff into a Historic Preservation Handbook in March of 2009. The Handbook was developed to assist Historic District property owners with best practices in maintaining and renovating their historic properties along with providing the required Historic Preservation Guidelines that must be followed. Copies of the Handbook were distributed to every property owner in the Chautauqua and Miller Historic Districts. Since that time, staff has been tracking potential revisions needed to the 2008 Historic Preservation Guidelines and the 2009 Historic Preservation Handbook.

In July of 2018, the Historic District Commission initiated the update of the 2008 Historic Preservation Guidelines and 2009 Preservation Handbook by forming the Historic Preservation Guideline Update Subcommittee. A copy of identified revisions tracked for both documents over the years by staff was used as a beginning point for discussions. The Subcommittee met twice in-person and then continued reviewing the Handbook virtually until December of 2018.

The Subcommittee's review process resulted in a list of corrections to be used as a guide to a future revision process by a consultant. Items identified by the Subcommittee included: the clarification of design guidelines for garages, particularly the size, height and materials; the addition of a door replacement process; window replacement clarification; coordination of demolition guidelines with criteria listed in the Historic District Ordinance; the need for more information on alternative materials and solar panels; as well as minor corrections such as typos. See Exhibit A.

On July 9, 2019, the Council accepted Certified Local Government grant funds through a contract with the State Historic Preservation Office. As part of that grant acceptance, the City appropriated matching funds for the professional services of a consultant to update the City of Norman Historic Preservation Guidelines and Handbook. A Request for Proposals for professional services was issued September 24, 2019.

A contract between the City of Norman and Mainstreet Architects, Inc., out of San Antonio, TX, was signed on November 19, 2019 for the update of the Historic Preservation Guidelines and Handbook. A kick-off meeting was held on December 9, 2019 with the consultant to provide an opportunity for the Historic District Commission to discuss desired revisions. The Commission highlighted particular issues of concern, including: materials, garages, parking, additions, windows, energy efficiency aspects, the lack of historical information regarding Southridge Historic District, graphics of appropriate architectural elements and concepts, were all identified as elements that needed to be revised.

The consultant used both the Subcommittee's list of identified corrections and the Commission input as a starting point for revisions to the Historic Preservation Guidelines and Handbook. The consultant met again with the Historic District Commission on January 27, 2020 to review an outline of proposed changes. In February of that year the Coronavirus Pandemic struck and the revision process slowed. The contract with the consultant was extended to provide additional time to complete the revisions.

The consultant presented a proposed Draft Historic Preservation Guideline and Handbook at the October 5, 2020 Historic District Commission Workshop. The Draft Guidelines and Handbook included revisions to the following sections: materials, additions, garages, energy efficiency, and background information on Southridge. The consultant also added graphic illustrations of appropriate architectural elements for the various house styles. The Commission gave feedback at this meeting and the consultant incorporated those revisions, delivering a final copy of the Historic Preservation Guidelines and Handbook in November of 2020. See Exhibit B.

In January of 2021, staff prepared the Draft Historic Preservation Guidelines for the Historic District Commission's consideration and recommendation for adoption to the City Council. The Historic Preservation Handbook document is not part of this adoption process, as the contents are not regulatory. Once the Draft Historic Preservation Guidelines are adopted they will be incorporated into a revised Historic Preservation Handbook at a later date.

The Draft Historic Preservation Guidelines prepared by staff, were discussed by the Historic District Commission at three public Historic District Commission Workshops held on March 2, April 5, and May 3, 2021. Further refinements were made at these Workshops regarding the garage, addition, accessory structures, and windows sections by the Commission with staff's assistance, resulting in the 2021 Draft Historic Preservation Guidelines.

The 2021 Draft Historic Preservation Guidelines were posted to the City of Norman website in late June. At the same time, postcards were mailed to every property owner in the three designated Historic Districts inviting them to make comments at two Historic Preservation Guidelines Public Input Meetings to be held in July.

The Historic Preservation Guidelines Public Input Meetings were held on July 19 and July 26, 2021 in the City Council Chambers. Staff presented a summary of revisions to the Historic Preservation Guidelines at both meetings and citizens provided feedback and comments. Twelve citizens attended the July 19 meeting with three of them providing comments. At the

July 26, meeting, there were six citizens in attendance with two of them providing comments. In addition, staff received emailed comments or in-person comments from three other citizens. A summary of the comments are attached as Exhibit C.

At the August 2, 2021 Historic District Commission Meeting, public comments were reviewed and/or incorporated into the Guidelines. A recommendation for adoption of the 2021 Draft Historic Preservation Guidelines as presented in Exhibit D was made at this meeting. An annotated version of the 2021 Historic Preservation Guidelines is also provided in Exhibit E.

With the completion of the 2021 Draft Historic District Guidelines, staff revised the Historic District section of the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate proposed Historic Preservation Guidelines. The 2021 Draft Historic District Ordinance will be presented in a separate agenda item.

DISCUSSION:

The Historic District Commission over the course of the last year and half beginning with the consultant kick-off meeting in December of 2019 and ending with recommendation for adoption of the Draft Historic Preservation Guidelines Historic District Commission Meeting in August, has worked in a public process to revise the Historic Preservation Guidelines.

Additionally, to ensure adequate public feedback, as previously described, the Commission sponsored two public input meetings to allow residents of the Chautauqua, Miller and Southridge Historic Districts, an opportunity to provide feedback on the 2021 Draft Historic Preservation Guidelines. With the completion of the public revision process the Historic District Commission forwards the Draft Historic Preservation Guidelines for consideration and adoption.

Below staff provides a summation of the proposed revisions found in the 2021 Draft Historic Preservation Guidelines.

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION GUIDELINES

1. The following work items were made eligible for approval for a Certificate of Appropriateness through the Administrative Bypass process by city staff:
 - a. Garden and accessory structures less than 400 sq. ft. in rear yard
 - b. Storm shelters less than 120 sq. ft. in rear yard
 - c. Parking/concrete areas less than 400 sq. ft. in rear yard
 - d. Walk ways in rear yard
 - e. Swimming pools in rear yard
 - f. Garage door replacement either with wood or wood composite door
 - g. Front & side yard fences less than 4' – clarified the criteria to be met
 - h. Rear yard fences less than 6' - clarified the criteria to be met
 - i. National Register of Historic Places plaque – limited to 2 sq ft.
 - j. Removal of non-historic siding to reveal historic siding
 - k. Solar panels and solar tubes on the rear of house
 - l. Solar racks less than 120 sq. ft.
 - m. Window replacement – clarified criteria to be met
 - n. Storm windows & doors and screens
 - o. Fabric awnings
 - p. Front doors
 - q. Screening of rear porches
 - r. Rear balconies or porches less than 120 sq. ft.

- s. Replacement of steps in-kind while allowing for reconfiguration of steps to meet building codes
 - t. Replacement of concrete porch flooring in-kind
 - u. Accessibility ramps and handrails
 - v. Decks less than 300 sq. ft. that are located on the rear of the structure
 - w. Demolition or relocation of accessory structure less than 120 sq. ft.
2. A majority of the revisions were made in the following sections of the Historic Preservation Guidelines:
- a. Garages:
 - i. Garages capped at 575 sq. ft. or 50% of the principal structure, whichever is smaller;
 - ii. Cumulative sq. ft. of garage(s) can be no larger than foot print of house
 - iii. Maximum of 2 garages per property;
 - iv. Allows the use of cement fiberboard when visibility is limited.
 - b. Accessory structures:
 - i. Accessory structures was divided into three separate sections with separate design guidelines for each:
 - 1. Accessory Structures 120 – 400 sq. ft.;
 - 2. Secondary Structures 400 sq. ft. or larger, this includes such structures as art studios & garage apartments;
 - 3. Garages.
 - c. Windows and Doors:
 - i. Window and doors were separated into two sections, each with their own design guidelines;
 - ii. Clarified when deteriorated windows are allowed to be replaced – must be more than 50% deteriorated;
 - iii. Clarified appropriate replacement materials.
 - d. Fences:
 - i. Removed fence palette as it was not being used;
 - ii. Allowed for chain link in rear yard.
 - e. Energy efficiency:
 - i. Guidelines added for such items as solar panels and solar racks;
 - f. Material Sections:
 - i. 4050 Additional sections were added for stucco, masonry, metal and cement fiberboard.

CONCLUSION:

Staff presents Resolution No. R-2122-58 to Planning Commission for discussion and consideration.

Exhibits:

Exhibit A - 2018 Historic Preservation Update Subcommittee List of Revisions
 Exhibit B – 2020 Draft Historic Preservation Handbook & Guidelines
 Exhibit C - 2021 Summary of Public Comments on Revised HP Guidelines
 Exhibit D - 2021 Historic Preservation Guidelines Clean
 Exhibit E - 2021 Annotated Historic Preservation Guidelines
 Exhibit F – August 4, 2021 Historic District Commission Minutes