



# HISTORIC PRESERVATION ZONING NEWS

Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission

## Potential New Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlay

A portion of the Sylvan Park neighborhood is being considered for local historic designation as a Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlay. The proposed boundaries include Park and Elkins Avenues between 43rd and 51st Avenues North and parts of Charlotte Avenue.

If adopted by Metro Council, demolition, additions and new construction in this district would be reviewed by a set of design guidelines based on the National Park Service's Secretary of Interior Standards.

Property owners typically desire a local historic overlay because it has



*The majority of properties in the proposed overlay are residential with the exception of these two commercial buildings boarding the park.*

been proven to stabilize property values and protect investments.

The larger Sylvan Park neighborhood began in 1887 with a plan for Richland Park and residential lots along the present Park Avenue, formerly known as First Avenue. Additional areas were added to make up what is now known as "Sylvan Park".

Homes of the Victorian,

Queen Anne and Eastlake styles were most popular among the homes built between 1887 and approximately 1910. After 1910 and continuing through the period of the Great Depression, the bungalow became the predominant style. With the advent of World War II, construction all but stopped, due to shortages of materials. Immediately after the war, a new modern style house replaced the bungalow as the predominate type.

A draft of the design guidelines and a map of the district are available online at [www.nashville.gov/mhc](http://www.nashville.gov/mhc).

## Promote your business

Promote your business with sponsorship of the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (NAPC) biennial conference to be held in Norfolk, VA in

2012 or join the professional directory with a \$100 membership. The NAPC is the only organization devoted solely to representing the nation's preservation

design review commissions. For more information about the conference and membership, visit [www.uga.edu/napc](http://www.uga.edu/napc)

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

June 2011

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## Accessory Dwelling Units: A Sustainable Incentive



Metro Council has adopted a zoning text change that will allow for detached accessory dwelling units on properties that are within a historic zoning overlay district and also zoned R, RM, and OR districts.

There are several restrictions on the placement and size of the accessory building that will protect the historic character of the districts.

Detached accessory dwelling units are

environmentally, economically and socially sustainable. The ability to have additional income can help with the upkeep of older homes and there is no need to worry about absentee landlords as the owner of the property is required to live onsite. The amendment is environmentally sustainable by encouraging urban living where people can walk or bike to work, to play or to shop. It is

socially sustainable by protecting the economic diversity of our historic neighborhoods. Where else but in a historic district can the CEO of a multi-million dollar company live next door to a student, for instance?

Visit [www.nashville.gov/mc/ordinances/term\\_2007\\_2011/bl2011\\_900.pdf](http://www.nashville.gov/mc/ordinances/term_2007_2011/bl2011_900.pdf) for the details.



**Above:** Trevor Porter, student at TSU, tours the Work House on Fisk University's Campus with architect Bea Thompson.

**Below:** Julie Blanc from Marseille, France organizes historic building plans.



## Intern Update

The Metro Historical Commission recently welcomed two interns.

Trevor R. Porter, an undergraduate student at Tennessee State University, is majoring in History with a minor in music. During Trevor's internship at the MHC his main task was scanning historic photographs. He also had the opportunity to tour the ongoing renovation at the Work House on Fisk's campus, and assisted with several Civil War-related events. Trevor

completed his work with the MHC this April but hopes to return in the fall.

Julie Blanc from Marseille, France, began her internship in mid-April and will work through the summer and fall. Julie earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Aix-Marseille. Julie's time will be divided between the non-profit organization, Tennessee Preservation Trust, and the Metro Historical Commission, giving her a broad view of local historic preservation

efforts. For the MHC she will be organizing archival materials and assisting with events.

The MHC internship is an ongoing, unpaid, program that provides interested students the opportunity to learn more about the workings of local preservation including preservation zoning, research, survey and education. For more information visit, [www.nashville.gov/mhc/employment.asp](http://www.nashville.gov/mhc/employment.asp)

## New Guidelines for Sustainability

The National Park Service (NPS) rolled out new guidelines to help improve the energy efficiency of historic buildings while preserving their historic character.

The Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings offer practical advice to building owners, developers and preservation practitioners. The guidelines show recommended – and not recommended – approaches to projects, from solar panel installation to heating and air

conditioning upgrades to weatherization and insulation.

The National Park Service’s Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program incentivizes more than \$4 billion in private investment in historic preservation annually. To be eligible for the tax credits, construction projects must comply with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. The guidelines are supplementary to the standards.

The new guidelines were developed with assistance from the preservation community, including other federal agencies, the development community, state and local governments, as well as private individuals. They are the latest in a series of NPS publications created by its Technical Preservation Services Division that offer usable, how-to advice for historic preservation. View the new guidelines.

[www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/index.htm)



*A geothermal system evidenced by a panel in the sidewalk, was installed on the site of this historic firehouse during rehabilitation.*

## Permit Process

Alterations to properties in a historic overlay require both a Preservation Permit from the MHZC and a Building Permit from the Metro Codes Departments. So where should you start to obtain all required permits?

The MHZC recommends beginning with us when you are in the early planning stages so we can provide guidance on what may or may not meet the design guidelines.

We then recommend submitting plans to both the Codes Department and the MHZC at the same time, especially for projects with a scope of work that includes infill or an addition.

Each department reviews different aspects of the project, so a request from the Codes department could have bearing on the design review process; therefore, it is helpful to have as much information

as you can, as early as you can.

Some actions will only require review by MHZC staff which means you could have a Preservation Permit in a day or two. Actions such as large additions and the construction of new buildings will require review by the MHZC.

*For more information about the Preservation Permit review process, please visit [www.nashville.gov/mhc/mhzc/permits.asp](http://www.nashville.gov/mhc/mhzc/permits.asp)*



## Downtown Nashville Sign Study



*Projecting blade signs are typical sign choice in the downtown core.*

A team of consultants, is currently writing a draft downtown sign code that will include Broadway and Second Avenue Historic Preservation Zoning Overlays.

The Code is not meant to replace the design guidelines already used for these areas and the current findings are inline with existing design guidelines. If a new code is adopted it will likely be

a seamless transition for property owners in the two downtown historic overlays.

Given the diversity of development in and the difference between the desired long term character of development and the existing conditions in Downtown, stakeholders felt a comprehensive signage study would aid in crafting signage standards that

are tailored to the character of the different Downtown Code Subdistricts, and that contribute to the beauty as well as the economic viability of businesses in Downtown.

The Consultants presentation can be viewed at

[www.nashville.gov/mpc/communityplans/subarea/subarea9.asp](http://www.nashville.gov/mpc/communityplans/subarea/subarea9.asp)

## Side Dormers Meet Neighborhood Conservation Design Guidelines



*The Commission has determined that appropriately scaled and designed side dormers meet the design guidelines in Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlays.*

The MHZC continuously seeks to provide additional advice on meeting the design guidelines for Neighborhood Conservation and Historic Preservation Zoning Overlays.

This advice is added to the design guidelines in the form of italicized information but does not change the existing design guidelines and is not specifically a design guideline.

Recently, large additions

have become more popular, so the MHZC is exploring the best way to control the size of additions. The goal is to prevent a rear addition from overwhelming the historic building or the neighborhood. To compensate for the potential loss in addable space, the MHZC already allows for ridge raises on side-gabled buildings, which can allow for the capture of attic space that was unusable before.

In addition, they recently reinterpreted the design guidelines to allow for side dormers in Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlays. In the past, they have interpreted the design guidelines as only allowing for rear dormers. (Whitland and South Music Row NZO have always allowed for both front and side dormers.) The revised design guidelines will soon be posted on the website .

## Landmark Sign Ordinance

By Joni Priest, The Design Studio of the Metro Planning Department, (615) 862-7165

In recent years, changes to zoning regulations have made some historic, landmark signs nonconforming. If the sign is removed to repair the sign or the building façade, the sign is no longer “grandfathered” and cannot be reinstalled.

The Planning Department, with input from the Historic Commission staff, has proposed adding a section to the zoning code on Landmark Signs. The new ordinance would provide a process for the designation of Landmark Signs – Historic, Vintage or Replica – and, upon designation, a process for which the signs can be cleaned and repaired, and the sign can be removed for the façade to be cleaned and repaired, without triggering nonconformance. The bill is sponsored by Councilmembers Jason Holleman and Phil Claiborne.

A Landmark Sign is quite literally a landmark. It can provide direction, but may also be an icon within a neighborhood. As corridors and neighborhoods evolve over time, the community has an opportunity to preserve Landmark Signs as historic and our cultural resources.

Allowing the preservation, adaptive reuse, and replication of Landmark Signs helps maintain a sense of place in a community. Signs are often

important to a community and are valued for more than their role as commercial markers. They become landmarks, loved because they have been visible at certain street corners – or from many vantage points across the city – for a long time. Such signs are valued for their familiarity, their beauty, their humor, their size, or even their oddities. In these cases, signs transcend their conventional role as vehicles of information or as identifiers for a particular business. When signs reach this stage, they accumulate rich layers of meaning. They no longer merely advertise, but are valued in and of themselves. They become icons worthy of designation as Landmark Signs.

Designation as Landmark Sign will require the applicant to demonstrate how the sign is an excellent representation of a particular period of construction and/or that the sign demonstrates extraordinary aesthetic quality, creativity or innovation.

Designation as a Landmark Sign – the umbrella term – requires meeting criteria of materials, technology and design, integrity, safety, location, and regionalism. An applicant seeking designation as an Historic Sign must provide sufficient documentation to demonstrate that the sign

is more than 50 years old and must propose a restoration and maintenance plan for the sign. An applicant seeking designation as a Vintage Sign must provide sufficient documentation to demonstrate that the sign is more than 25 years old and must propose a restoration and maintenance plan for the sign. An applicant seeking to create a Replica Sign must provide sufficient documentation regarding the design and location of the sign they wish to replicate.

Designation as a Landmark Sign does not preclude the owner from removing the sign. Landmark Sign designation is intended to allow the owner flexibility in preserving and maintaining iconic signs.

The Landmark Sign designation will allow the owner to preserve historic and vintage signs, and help neighborhoods retain a unique identity while ensuring that the signs are safe and well maintained.

The Landmark Sign ordinance was approved by the Planning Commission on May 12, 2011. The public hearing at Metro Council is scheduled for July 05, 2011. The draft ordinance is available in the Current Initiatives section of the Planning Department’s website.



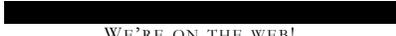


**Guiding the Future by  
Preserving the Past.**

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Zoning Commission

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.NASHVILLE.GOV/MHC

LIKE THE METRO HISTORICAL  
COMMISSION ON FACEBOOK.



*The Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission (MHZC) reviews applications to create new historic overlay districts and reviews preservation permit applications for historic preservation and neighborhood conservation zoning overlays and landmark sites for new construction, alterations, additions, repair and demolition.*

*The MHZC's nine volunteer members, appointed by the mayor and confirmed by Metro Council, include representatives from zoning districts, the Metropolitan Planning Commission, the Metropolitan Historical Commission; architect (s), and other citizens of Davidson County.*

*Our sister organization, the Metropolitan Historical Commission (MHC), is a municipal historic preservation agency working to document history, save and reuse buildings, and make the public more aware of the necessity and advantages of preservation in Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee. Created in 1966, the commission consists of fifteen citizens appointed by the mayor and confirmed by Metro Council.*

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## Rate the MHZC

Help us help you by rating your experience with our department. Visit [www.surveymonkey.com/s/8N6GHKC](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/8N6GHKC) to complete a short survey.

So far more than half of the respondents were property owners. Seventy two percent of all respondents "strongly agree" that "staff provided the necessary technical

advice, information, and/or permits needed in a timely manner."

Have ideas on how we can improve? Let us know.

"This is a great office that shows how helpful and professional many Metro employees are." —March 2011