

# HISTORIC LANDMARK INTERIOR

## HISTORIC LANDMARK INTERIOR ZONING OVERLAY

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## METROPOLITAN HISTORIC ZONING COMMISSION

Metropolitan Government of  
Nashville and Davidson County

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. HISTORIC LANDMARK INTERIOR

Please also see *MHZC Hand Book*.

In more than two thousand towns in the United States, neighborhoods and commercial districts use historic zoning as a tool to protect their unique architectural characters. There are quantifiable reasons for historic zoning: gives neighborhoods and commercial areas greater control over development; stabilizes property values; decreases the risk of investing in one’s building; promotes heritage tourism; protects viable urban housing stock; and preserves natural resources by conserving building materials. And there are less quantifiable, but equally important, reasons for historic zoning -- protects our past for future generations, nurtures a sense of community, and provides a sense of place.

Historic zoning overlays are **locally** designated and administered by the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission (MHZC), an agency of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County. Historic zoning overlays are applied in addition to the base or land-use zoning of an area. *Historic zoning overlays do not impact use.*

Like the National Register of Historic Places, historic zoning honors an area’s historical significance. There are five types of historic zoning overlays: historic preservation, neighborhood conservation, historic B&B, historic landmarks and historic landmark interiors.

In neighborhood conservation and historic B&B zoning overlays, certain exterior work on buildings—new construction, additions, demolition, and relocation—is reviewed to ensure that the neighborhood’s special character is preserved. In addition to the projects reviewed in neighborhood conservation and historic B&B zoning overlays, historic preservation and historic landmark overlays also include review of exterior alterations to existing buildings -- like replacing windows, altering storefronts, or painting brick. For historic landmark interior, alterations, changes and repairs to specified interiors are reviewed. Often properties that have a historic landmark interior overlay are also a historic landmark, providing protection both inside and outside of the building. Overlays with historic preservation or historic

#### **WHAT IS REVIEWED:**

##### *IN A HISTORIC LANDMARK OVERLAY*

- *New construction (primary and secondary structures)*
- *Additions – increased footprint, height or building envelope of an existing structure*
- *Demolition (in whole or in part)*
- *Relocation of structures*
- *Construction of appurtenances (with the exception of portable storage buildings less than 100 square feet)*
- *Signage*
- *Repairs and Alterations to existing structures*
- *Setback Determinations*
- *In a Historic Landmark Interior all or some interior alterations are also reviewed in addition to exterior alterations.*

##### *IN A HISTORIC LANDMARK INTERIOR OVERLAY*

- *New construction in the areas specified as under the overlay*
- *Interior demolition (in whole or in part)*
- *Repairs and Alterations in the areas specified as under the overlay.*



## I. INTRODUCTION

landmark zoning are not more historically significant than those with neighborhood conservation zoning; rather, the MHZC, in conjunction with neighborhood input and direction of the Council Member, determined that these overlays are most compatible with the goals of the neighborhood and the MHZC.

## B. WHAT ARE THE DESIGN GUIDELINES?

The Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission (MHZC) is the architectural review board that reviews applications for work on properties within historic zoning overlay districts. Its nine members, appointed by the mayor, include representatives from zoning districts, the Metropolitan Planning Commission, the Metropolitan Historical Commission, architect(s) and others. Design review is administered according to a set of design guidelines. The guidelines are criteria and standards, developed jointly by the MHZC and the residents of the neighborhood, which are used in determining the architectural compatibility of proposed projects. The guidelines provide direction for project applicants and ensure that the decisions of the MHZC are not arbitrary or based on anyone's personal taste.

The guidelines protect the neighborhood from new construction or additions not in character with the neighborhood's historic character and from the loss of architecturally or historically important buildings.

By state and local legislation, design guidelines for historic overlays must be in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*—criteria developed by the National Park Service and used by private and public preservation organizations throughout the country. (Please see I.D.)

### IN A HISTORIC PRESERVATION OVERLAY

- *New construction (primary and secondary structures)*
- *Additions – increased footprint, height or building envelope of an existing structure*
- *Demolition (full or in part)*
- *Relocation of structures*
- *Construction of appurtenances (with the exception of portable storage buildings less than 100 square feet)*
- *Signage*
- *Repairs and Alterations to existing structures*
- *Setback Determinations*

### IN A NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION OVERLAY (NCZO) (also B&B Homestays)

- *New construction (primary and secondary structures)*
- *Additions – increased footprint, height or building envelope of an existing structure*
- *Demolition (in whole or in part)*
- *Relocation of structures*
- *Setback Determinations*

## I. INTRODUCTION

### C. PURPOSE OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

Within the zoning ordinance, “historic zoning” is used as the general term for Nashville’s five types of zoning overlay districts applicable to historic properties: historic preservation, neighborhood conservation, historic bed and breakfast, historic landmark and historic landmark interiors.

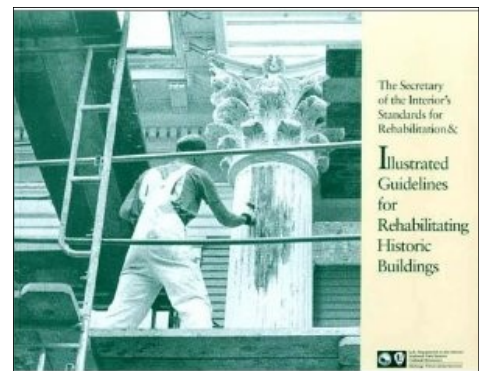
A. Design guidelines are criteria and standards which the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission must consider in determining the appropriateness of proposed work within a Historic Landmark Interior. Appropriateness of work must be determined in order to accomplish the goals of Historic Landmark Interiors as outlined in Article IX (Historic Zoning Regulations), Metropolitan Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance:

1. To preserve and protect the historical and/or architectural value of buildings or other structures;
2. To regulate exterior and interior design, arrangement, texture, and materials proposed to be used within the historic district or property to ensure compatibility;
3. To create an aesthetic appearance which complements the historic building and its site;
4. To foster civic beauty;
5. To strengthen the local economy; and
6. To promote the use of historic districts for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the present and future citizens of Nashville and Davidson County.

B. By state law, all design guidelines for Historic Landmark Interiors must comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties.

*Most buildings will have an inventory of significant spaces and features created at the time of designation. Please consult this survey for additional guidance on appropriate repair, replacement and alterations.*

*Staff can assist with finding alternatives to building codes so that historical features can be retained and still meet codes.*



The full set of Secretary of Interior Standards may be found online at [www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/standguide/](http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/standguide/)

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **D. SECRETARY OF INTERIOR STANDARDS**

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will 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 elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will 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.

## II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ALTERATIONS

### A. GENERAL GUIDANCE

1. Wherever possible, retain character-defining features of designated interior spaces including floor plan, ceiling height, and distinctive features, materials, and finishes.
  - a. Examples of distinctive materials include elements such as wood, iron, aluminum, cast iron, marble, terra cotta, tile, stucco, plaster, and brick.
  - b. Examples of important historic finishes include items such as decorative wood flooring, carpeting, wallpaper, paint, plaster, and other applied ornament.
  - c. Examples of significant architectural features include elements such as cornices, brackets, railings, columns, interior shutters, baseboards, fireplaces, window and door moldings, stairs and walls, fixed furniture, light fixtures, and hardware.
2. Removal or alteration of any historic interior feature should only be undertaken when the feature is beyond repair.
3. Repair deteriorated interior architectural features, wherever possible. Significant interior architectural features generally should not be removed during the repair process, unless removal is necessary to retain the feature and it can be replaced without damage or alteration.
4. Replace interior architectural materials and features that are deteriorated beyond repair with the same materials and design as the original. If the original material is unavailable or not feasible, replacement materials should match the original in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. The use of materials that were unavailable when the building was constructed is discouraged.
5. Replace missing architectural features based on accurate duplication of features, substantiated by historical, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than on conjecture.



Character defining features of the interior of the Main level of the Ben West Library include the wide open space and arched windows.



Staircase of the Hall-Harding-McCampbeell House at 305 Kent Road, prior to rehabilitation.



## II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ALTERATIONS

6. Features that need to be removed should be documented prior to removal following the National Park Service’s documentation requirements. This minimally includes photographs and might include drawings.
7. Historic interiors should be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and seek to create an earlier, historic appearance are discouraged.
8. Previous changes to an interior that have acquired historic significance in their own right should be recognized and respected. Intrusive changes that have resulted in harm to historic building fabric or in the loss of historical significance and integrity may be reversed as part of a rehabilitation project.

### B. DESIGN GUIDELINES

#### 1. Overall Plan, Proportions & Configuration

- a. Retain and preserve interior spaces, including size, configuration, proportion, and relationship of rooms and corridors, that are important in defining the designated historic interior.
- b. Do not subdivide character-defining interior spaces either vertically, through the insertion of new partitions, or horizontally, through the insertion of new floors or mezzanines. The addition of interior partitions may be considered if they do not damage or destroy structural systems or obscure or damage character-defining spaces, features, or finishes and are easily removable or temporary.
- c. Non-historic partitions installed during earlier renovations may be removed in order to restore the room to its original proportions and size.
- d. Do not cut through floors and ceilings where this work would damage character-defining interior spaces.



Structure for skylight inside Union Station on Broadway.

## II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ALTERATIONS

- e. Install new stairways, floor elevations, fire escapes, and other code required elements in a manner which does not diminish the integrity of the designated interior nor change the exterior, such as new floor lines that cross in front of windows.
- f. Do not add conjectural features that create a false sense of history. New interior features or finishes may be appropriate when there is no physical, historical or pictorial documentation. In these cases, the new feature or finish should be compatible with the scale, design, materials, color and texture of the surviving features and finishes.

### 2. Vertical Circulation

- a. Retain and preserve character-defining stairs and elevators in their historic configuration and location.
- b. Retain the original material and architectural features of stairs, such as steps, hand rails, balusters, columns, brackets, and decorative materials. If these materials must be replaced, the new materials should match the original in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities.
- c. Retain and preserve existing historic elevator cabs and other character-defining elements, such as call buttons or floor indicators. Original cabs can often be upgraded with new elevator systems in order to meet current building codes.
- d. If required by building code, place new stairs and elevators in secondary spaces or service areas.

### 3. Ceilings

- a. Retain and preserve the original ceiling height, materials, and ornament, whenever possible. Deteriorated ceiling materials should be replaced with new material that matches the old in composition, size, shape,



## II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ALTERATIONS

color, and texture.

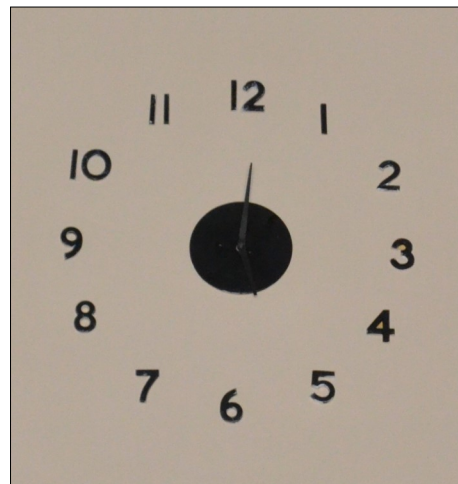
- b. Do not install suspended ceilings below ornamental ceilings or in spaces where high ceilings define interior character.
- c. If suspended ceilings are installed in secondary spaces, design new ceiling soffits to be well set back from the windows so the suspended ceiling is not visible from the exterior.

### 4. Walls & Trim

- a. Retain original wall finishes and replace if missing. Removing paint, plaster, or other finishes to create a new appearance, such as exposed brick, is not appropriate.
- b. Retain original paint finishes such as marbled and wood grained paint.

### 5. Windows & Doors

- a. Retain and repair existing window and door elements and openings, including window sashes, transoms, glass, lintels, sills, frames, molding, doors, and all hardware, whenever possible. Do not introduce new window or door openings into the principal room elevations or alter window or door openings to fit new stock windows and doors.
- b. If original sashes and doors are no longer extant, replacements should duplicate the size, material, design, and hardware of the originals.
- c. Storm windows and doors (while normally installed to the exterior) may be installed on the interior if they are visually unobtrusive, do not damage existing frames, and can be removed in the future. Interior storm windows should match the interior trim color. Mill finished aluminum and vinyl frames can be painted to match the window frame.



Wall clock at the Ben West Library.



Decorative window in the Customs House on Broadway.

## II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ALTERATIONS

### 6. Railings

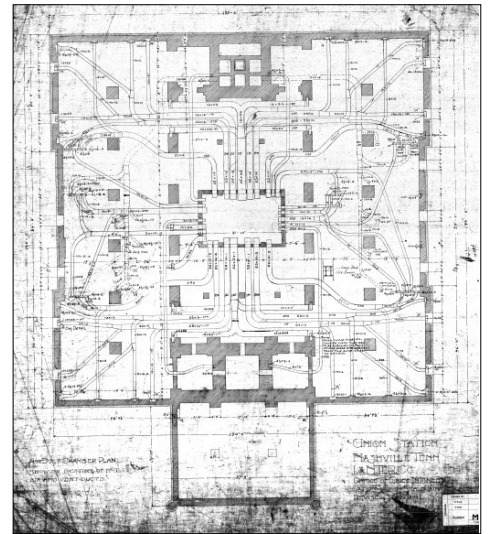
- a. Do not remove historic railings at balconies or other locations. Railings are important elements of the design and character within a structure.
- b. Do not replace railings with new railings of an inappropriate design or material.
- c. If additional height is needed for safety, a simple design should be installed to the existing railing in an unobtrusive manner.

### 7. Structural Systems

- a. Weakened, damaged, or inadequate structural members and systems should be promptly stabilized, repaired, or reinforced. If access to structural members requires removal or destruction of distinctive finish materials, they should be documented and returned to their previous appearance after work is completed.

### 8. Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing Systems

- a. Retain original light fixtures in designated spaces.
- b. Retain and preserve visible character-defining mechanical, electrical, and plumbing system elements, such as heat registers, vents, fans, radiators, switch plates, light fixtures, and plumbing fixtures, where possible.
- c. New interior light fixtures should be an appropriate size and placed in an appropriate location.
- d. Install new mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems in a way that does not alter, damage, or destroy character-defining spaces, features, and finishes. Locate new bathrooms or equipment rooms in secondary spaces or service areas. Install ducts, pipes, wiring, and security and telecommunications cables as inconspicuously as possible utilizing



Mechanical drawing for Union Station.

## II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ALTERATIONS

secondary spaces, attics, basements, and existing closets.

- e. Avoid furring-out exterior walls to add insulation and suspending new ceilings to hide ductwork.
- f. Provide adequate ventilation in attics, crawlspaces, and basements to avoid deterioration of systems from excessive moisture.

### 9. Cleaning

- a. Clean masonry, wood, architectural metals, and plaster only when necessary to halt deterioration or to remove graffiti and stains. Indiscriminate removal of paint may cause damage.
- b. Clean architectural metals such as bronze, cast iron, steel, pressed sheet metal, aluminum, and zinc with an appropriate method. Do not alter the color, texture and tone of the metal.
- c. Use the gentlest methods possible when cleaning the surface of interior materials and finishes. Cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials are not allowed.
- d. Evaluate cleaning methods in a small test area first in order to observe any potential adverse effects.
- e. Use the gentlest means possible when cleaning masonry, such as a low-pressure water spray (100-400 psi) and natural-bristle brushes. Under-clean rather than over-clean. Only use proper commercial masonry cleaning agents. Follow manufacturer's instructions. Test cleaning methods in a small area. When possible, allow the test area to "weather" for several months. Do not blast water at high pressure (over 400 psi). Never Sandblast. Repoint first and clean second, in order to limit water penetration during the cleaning process. Clean masonry when temperatures within the building will remain above fifty degrees Fahrenheit for at least three days after the completion of cleaning.

## II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ALTERATIONS

### 10. Mortar

- a. Mortar joints deteriorate faster than masonry and must be periodically repointed. Repoint deteriorated joints only. The removal of all joints in order to achieve a uniform appearance is discouraged as this often results in damage to historic masonry.
- b. Remove unsound mortar joints carefully with hand tools that are narrower than the joint. Hand tools are recommended as power tools can easily, inadvertently remove brick as well as just mortar. Under special circumstances and careful supervision, use of power tools may be permitted. Require test samples for approval prior to beginning work. Do not damage masonry units.
- c. Remove unsound mortar to a depth of two-and-one-half times the width of the joint, or to sound mortar, whichever is greater.
- d. Replacement mortar should be compatible with historic masonry and the original mortar mix. Portland cement mortars are not appropriate for buildings constructed prior to c. 1900. Modern mortar mixtures tend to be harder than historic masonry and mortar, causing cracking of the masonry units during the freeze-thaw cycle, whereas historic mortar mixtures acted as “sacrificial” materials that were able to absorb such changes with no damage to the masonry. Develop a mortar mixture that uses similar sand and iron-oxide mortar pigments.
- e. Replacement mortar must match historic mortar joints in color, texture, joint size profile, and hardness. Do not use synthetic caulking compounds as an alternative to mortar.
- f. Major repointing projects should be undertaken by a masonry restoration professional. Historic mortar testing can be easily and inexpensively completed by trained material conservators.
- g. Repoint open and deteriorated mortar joints in brick masonry to match existing.

## II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ALTERATIONS

### 11. Brick & Stone

- a. When patching or repairing a section of a brick or stone, match the existing masonry in color, size, and texture, as well as the existing wall/feature in pattern and profile. If new masonry is required, piece-in new masonry into existing. Match existing joints in color, texture, joint size, and profile. A test panel may be required for approval.
- b. Remove each cracked or spalled section of masonry individually and replace to match existing.

### 12. Wood

- a. Wood has been used for structural framing, features, and details such as steps, handrails, window surrounds, trim, mantles and decorative features. These features are among the most striking and unique aspects of historic buildings and shall be retained.
- b. Keep painted coatings in good repair to protect wood surfaces from moisture. Filling, priming, and painting cracks can remedy many problems.
- c. Reduce wood deterioration by repairing faulty roofs, gutters, windows and other exterior elements that can allow for water penetration.
- d. Repair wood features using recognized wood preservation techniques, such as patching with appropriate patching materials, piecing-in, and consolidation methods.
- e. Only replace wood features that are deteriorated beyond repair. The Commission may consider the removal of lead-based paint hazards on wood features that are accessible, impact, or friction surfaces. Applicants must present test results that demonstrate the presence of lead-based paint on the feature. Replace deteriorated wood features or



Wood floor replacement where the original floor did not exist.

## II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ALTERATIONS

features that have been determined to be lead-based paint hazards with matching new wood features.

- f. Features that need to be removed should be documented prior to removal following the National Park Service’s documentation requirements. This minimally includes photographs and might include drawings.
- g. Use historic documentation, physical evidence, or photographs to accurately replicate missing features. If such documentation is not available, use a contemporary and simple design compatible with the size, scale, and material of the historic building.
- h. Do not install insulation within the exterior walls of wood frame construction without a proper vapor barrier at the inside surface. Without a vapor barrier, the insulation will absorb water from warmer, interior spaces, trapping moisture within the walls.
- i. Install sealant at vertical joints where wood meets a dissimilar material. Do not apply sealant to horizontal wood joints because it will trap moisture and cause deterioration.



Mantels are a significant interior feature in a residential building, such as this one at 115 Cottage Lane.

### 13. Plaster

- a. Stabilize loose or bulging plaster, particularly at ceilings and surfaces with ornamental plasterwork.
- b. Repair plaster with a plaster mixture that matches the original mix in composition, appearance, and texture as closely as possible.
- c. Do not remove plaster to expose masonry walls unless there is a documented historical precedent.

## II. NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ALTERATIONS

### 14. Paint and Paint Color

- a. Conduct a professional paint analysis of historic interior finishes prior to undertaking interior work.
- b. Remove paint and other clear finishes, when necessary, using the gentlest method possible.
- c. Repaint or refinish interior surfaces with a compatible paint or other coating system.
- d. Repaint with colors and sheen levels that are appropriate to the historic interior. Paint colors must be submitted for approval.
- e. Interior lighting strongly affects the perception of colors. Finalize interior paint colors after establishing the type, location, and intensity of interior lighting. If possible, final paint color selection should be done after lighting has been installed.
- f. Do not remove paint or other finishes from architectural features that were never intended to be uncoated. Do not add paint or other finishes to architectural features that were never intended to be coated.
- g. Repainting with the same color as existing color is considered maintenance and does not require a Preservation Permit.



### III. DEFINITIONS

**Appropriate:** *Suitable for, or compatible with, a property or district, based on accepted standards and techniques for historic preservation.*

**Architectural Features, Character Defining Features and Features:** *The details and component parts that together form the architectural style and design of a building/ structure or space.*

**Conjectural Features:** *The addition of features for which there is no evidence that they existed.*

**Documentation:** *Documentation always includes photographs and sometimes includes measured drawings.*

**Finishes:** *Completion of a material or object by giving it an attractive surface appearance.*

**Shall:** *What must happen.*

**Should:** *What must happen unless circumstances illustrate why an alternative is more appropriate.*





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*The Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission reviews applications to create new historic overlay districts and reviews and approves preservation permits in historic and conservation districts for new construction, alterations, additions, repair and demolition. For design guidelines, permit applications, and meeting information, visit us at [www.nashville.gov/mhc](http://www.nashville.gov/mhc).*

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