DESIGN REVIEW

Introduction

Historic districts illustrate the character and workmanship of our community's past. It is the goal of the HPC to maintain this historic integrity for present and future generations through the process of design review.

The Fort Wayne Historic Preservation Commission is responsible for developing and enforcing design guidelines for local historic districts. These guidelines provide direction in preserving the unique historic character of each area and they provide the framework for neighborhood revitalization. This is accomplished through a review process for all exterior modifications, new construction, site improvements, and demolition within the designated areas. The HPC has jurisdiction over all buildings, sites, structures, and districts designated as local historic landmarks. It reviews proposed exterior changes to those properties to ensure that the character-defining historic features remain intact. The Commission's objective in reviewing applications for approval is the preservation of historic fabric and enhancement of those features which caused the historic area or property to be designated.

The Commission views each building and site within an historic area as unique. It also recognizes that the value of each district equals the sum of its individual parts, both new and old. For this reason, all existing buildings and all new development are deemed to contribute to the architectural character of the area and all are subject to the review process.

What is Design Review?

Design review is simply the procedure of obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness. The HPC has two types of approval procedures: 1) staff approval and 2) HPC review. The procedure that applies to an application will depend on the type of work proposed. In all cases, an applicant will fill out an application and provide any necessary documentation.

What is the Purpose of Design Review?

The purpose of design review is to protect and preserve the existing historic character of both the individual properties within a district and the district as a whole. Some examples of what design review may include are: changes to existing, roofing, fencing, exterior light fixtures, windows and doors, porches, sidewalks, driveways, trees and landscaping, siding, masonry, paint colors, exterior mechanical equipment, and new construction.

It is imperative that all exterior changes or additions to individual properties be reviewed prior to commencement of construction to ensure compatibility with the district's historic character. A Certificate of Appropriateness is required by law. Work done prior to obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness is in violation and may result in delays and/or the need to make expensive changes.

What is the Design Review Process?

The HPC, in determining the appropriateness of any proposed new construction, reconstruction, alteration, or relocation will consider a number of factors. Most importantly, the proposed work should be appropriate in relation to the adopted historic district Guidelines and the character-defining characteristics of the property and surrounding district. This can be determined by color, scale, materials, details, texture, visual compatibility, and general design arrangement.

In determining the appropriateness of any proposed demolition, the Commission considers, in addition to any other pertinent factors, the character and significance of the subject structure in relation to other structures and the historic area as a whole.