Commission Procedures and Guidelines

1. Always have a printed agenda posted in a public place prior to beginning the commission meeting.

2. Keep accurate minutes and records of all commission activities specifically outlining each case and the reasons an application was approved or denied.

3. Commission members should never speak on behalf of the commission or advise applicants on the "likelihood of approval" of applications outside of the public hearing.

4. Require an accurate representation of the applicant's request, sufficient enough to make an informed decision about the case.

5. Always keep your elected officials and other boards and commissions informed of the role and responsibilities of the preservation commission.

6. The commission chair should maintain order at all meetings and always allow relevant public comment.

7. As a commission member, avoid any appearance of a conflict of interest due to personal, social, or financial gain in any case.

8. All commission decisions for designations or certificates of appropriateness must be based only on the review criteria in the ordinance.

9. All commission decisions must be based on a finding of fact that should be stated as a part of the motion to approve or deny the application.

10. Refer to your local preservation ordinance often if you are a commission member. It should be the basis for all actions.
Working with Local Government

1. Meet with your mayor and council at least once a year and update them on your activities, concerns, and problems.

2. Request that a member of the council be appointed to serve as a liaison with the preservation commission.

3. Get to know the other commissions and boards that serve the community as part of the local government, i.e. the planning commission, zoning appeals board, etc.

4. Print an annual report of the activities of the commission emphasizing success stories and new programs.

5. Learn how the commission can work with the housing administrator or Block Grant Administrator in your town to integrate preservation with projects serving low-income or elderly individuals.

6. Meet with the fire inspector, listen to his concerns, and tell him about those of the commission regarding the protection of historic sites.

7. Ensure that zoning ordinances, sign ordinances, etc. do not conflict with the design guidelines for landmarks and historic districts.

8. Meet with the Director of Public Works and ensure that the commission reviews all public improvements in historic districts and that the designs are compatible.

9. Meet with your city attorney before your commission runs into problems. Ask him/her to attend a meeting and critique it for proper procedural methods.

Integrating Preservation into the Planning Process

1. Coordinate the historic preservation review process with all other city or county agencies.

2. Integrate the historic sites survey material into the local planning process.

3. Review and coordinate land-use zoning in historic areas and for landmarks to avoid conflicts.

4. Establish a procedure to ensure that all state and federal review requirements have been met prior to final review by the commission.

5. Establish a phased-in procedure for reviewing large projects.

6. Establish policies and a procedure for reviewing investment tax credit projects and coordinate it with the SHPO.

7. Meet with owners of all properties and provide them with information and assistance regarding the preservation of structures before a crisis occurs.
WHAT CAN I DO TO PROTECT THE NEIGHBORHOOD?
- OR -
HOW DO ORDINANCES WORK?

People Want to Protect Resources → Draft a Protective Ordinance → Educate the Public → Cityadopts the Ordinance

Survey Historic Resources and Study Potential Designations → Adopt Rules of Procedure → Preservation Commission Appointed

Educate the Public → Determine Boundaries for Districts → Draft Designation Report and Mail to SHPO → Educate the Public

Residents Apply for Certificates of Appropriateness → Draft Design Review Guidelines → Hold Public Hearings and Designate District(s)

PEOPLE PROTECTING RESOURCES
WHAT IT MEANS TO ADOPT A PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

A PRESERVATION ORDINANCE DOES:

- Provide a municipal policy for the protection of historic properties.
- Establish an objective and democratic process for Designating historical properties.
- Protect the integrity of designated historic properties with a design review requirement.
- Authorize design guidelines for new development within historic districts to ensure that it is not destructive to the area’s historic character.
- Stabilize declining neighborhoods and protect and enhance property values.

A PRESERVATION ORDINANCE DOES NOT:

- Require permission to paint your house or review color selection.
- Require that historic properties be opened for tours.
- Restrict the sale of the property.
- Require improvements, changes, or restoration of the property.
- Require approval of interior changes or alterations.
- Prevent new construction within historic areas.
- Require approval for ordinary repair or maintenance.

** See the flowchart on the reverse side to examine the process establishing an ordinance. **

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