

**Historic District Revisions Committee
Metropolitan Planning Commission
110 State Street
Arthur A. Mendonsa Room**

**Meeting 7 Summary
Height and Lot Coverage
April 7, 2008
4:00 p.m.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael Brown, Earline Davis, Gwendolyn Fortson-Waring, Vaughnette Goode-Walker, Lawrence Lee, Jerry Lominack, W. John Mitchell, Donald Moore, Susan Myers, Ken Sadler, Swann Seiler, Richard Shinhoster, Kenneth Sirlin, Malik Watkins, and Robin Williams.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Peter Kusek, Andy Lynch, Joe Marinelli, John Neely

STAFF PRESENT: MPC: Tom Thomson (Facilitator), Charlotte Moore, Beth Reiter, Randolph Scott, Sabrina Thomas, Sarah Ward; City of Savannah: Chris Morrill, Rochelle Small-Toney; SDRA: Lise Sundrla; Consultant: Christian Sottile.

PUBLIC PRESENT: Elizabeth Davis, James Davis, Lee Hughes, Mark McDonald, Owen Murphy, Elizabeth Sprague, and Bill Stuebe.

I. WELCOME

Tom Thomson outlined the agenda for the meeting, and reminded of the additional meetings this week (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday). He informed that the old ordinance is being edited to conform with the format of the Unified Zoning Ordinance.. Charlotte Moore will present the new format at Tuesday's meeting.

II. STAFF PRESENTATION

Sarah Ward and Christian Sottile recapped Week Five: Continuation of Entrance, Windows, Materials and Sample Panel (see Weeks 5 and 7 at www.thempc.org, Historic District Revisions)

A. Downtown Master Plan Design Principles

B. Proposed Approach

C. Committee Questions and Comments

- i. What happens if the structure goes from retail to residential or vice versa in regard to window guidelines/requirements?
 - If the use changes prior to construction completion, the window design can be adjusted and reviewed again.
- ii. Where does the 75% rule for masonry on materials come from? Why not 50 or 60?
 - 75% has been used as a model from other ordinances. It establishes a threshold that the majority of the building will be of a known modular material and the balance can be of a material of any other approved for

- that community. It excludes the area for windows and glass curtain walls.
- iii. Of the large scale buildings constructed in the last year, is there an example that would violate the entrance standard?
 - Probably not because the old rules did not differentiate between service entrances and principal entrances.
 - iv. Primary entrances must have a street address, if it's a hotel, will each entrance require a street address?
 - That can't be required; each address *could* have an address.
 - It's most important that it is a real entrance.
 - MPC building is an example of this.
 - v. If there is a 150 foot lot with three individual 50 foot homes on it, that would be three entrances. If there was a 150 foot building, we can, in essence have only one entrance, correct?
 - They would be required one entrance for every 60 feet.
 - vi. Why increase the depth for windows?
 - Three inches is the standard now on row houses or any other development.
 - For large scale, more monumental buildings, four inches gives more depth and texture.
 - vii. In regard to materials, is scored stucco (made to look like granite block) acceptable?
 - Keeping mind we are only discussing large scale development, stucco is most successful in smaller scale buildings. While it does appear on civic buildings, historically it was not used on larger surfaces on large scale development.
 - viii. In regard to windows, is it correct to say as long as they meet percentages, there is no mandate that they can't be horizontally oriented?
 - No, there is a standard they have to have a 3 to 5 ratio and be taller than they are wide. That has not been identified as a concern. The curtain wall is being considered to be included in the ordinance.
 - ix. What would stop someone from putting their two entries contiguous that it may almost read as one? What defines a separate entrance? Does there have to be a certain percentage of material between the entrances?
 - We are currently entertaining suggestions on the definition of the entrance. It will have more study.
 - x. How long will the sample panel process be in terms of the building and what happens if it isn't adhered to in the end? Sample panel needs size standards.
 - The intent is for them to go ahead to get their permit. Panel will be erected by the time of the footing inspection.

- Any change should be resubmitted to HRB for approval. Changes made without approval are in violation.

The following subjects were presented with visual examples (see Week 7 at www.thempc.org, Historic District Revisions):

D. Parking, Paving, Utilities and Refuse, Fences, Walls, Screens and Trellises, and Lighting

E. Demolition, Gut Rehabilitation, Maintenance, Excavation and Archaeology

F. Proposed Approach

G. Committee Discussion

- i. When material needs to be replaced, but does not require a building permit, how would the property owner know it needed review?
 - Tom Todaro had the policy that all material changes in the Historic District required a permit. This needs to be reaffirmed with Inspections. Staff continually meets with real estate groups and neighborhoods to educate and provide information on the process.
- ii. Could a prohibited material be replaced in kind?
 - If it was on the prohibited materials list, they many need to come into compliance with the ordinance if more than 50% needs to be replaced.
 - They would be advised when obtaining the permit.
- iii. How do you define principal streets, north/south service streets?
 - The north/south service streets are being written into the definition section of the ordinance.
 - “Primary street” is only being used for the purpose of this presentation; it will not be referred to as such in the drafting of the ordinance.
- iv. What about lighting with hotel marquis?
 - That would fall under signage.
- v. The current ordinance states a fence should not exceed 11 feet. What prevents one from putting up a massive structure? Is there any language that can impose a shorter height?
 - Eleven feet is the maximum.
- vi. Parking – what if the building is on a trust lot?
 - It would still have to meet the same requirement and set 20 feet from all primary streets.
 - Most trust lots don’t have lanes. A decision would have to be made regarding the primary street.
- vii. Roofs – tarps are just as much of a problem as boarding windows.
 - It is required that the roof and windows are secured, but it has to be determined how long can it be left on.

III. HEIGHT AND LOT COVERAGE

Feedback was presented by Sarah Ward and Christian Sottile. The questions and responses are available via website. (www.thempc.org, Historic District Revisions Committee Meeting 4/7/08)

- A. How did the capacity factor get calculated? Show formula.
- 75% zone: $(.5 \times \text{max height}) + (.25 \times 0) + (.25 \times 2) = \text{DCF}$
 - 100% zone: $(.75 \times \text{max height}) + (.25 \times 2) = \text{DCF}$
- B. Which trumps – the capacity table or height compatibility? Which is superior?
- You must meet both.
- C. What does capacity reduction do to help neighbors? Sets an arbitrary limit on capacity without benefit.
- Public comment: The chart is rational. It is based on the height map. The benefit is to reduce the scale of new buildings in the Historic District. Savannah has been put on the National Park Services endangered list before because of incompatible new construction.
- D. Has there been any consideration of creating a third zone in the areas where 75% meets 100%?
- The height compatibility table tries to address these areas by requiring a step down at the lane where 100% zone abuts a 75% zone.
- E. Should the 8-12-14 story high zones be exempted from the development capacity table?
- Staff is restudying DCT for smaller parcels that trigger LSD requirements due to their height. Might not be required for 5,400 square foot parcels/footprints.

Comment. Test table against actual cases in 100% zone. Test 4-5-6 story.

Comment: When you trigger a public benefit with a restriction you have to define the public benefit.

- F. Does the ordinance specify dimensional requirements for the devices for dividing base, middle, top to avoid someone just changing colors or some other completely flat process.
- No, but it should.
- G. Should HVAC units on roofs be screened from public view? To what extent?
- The ordinance requires HVAC visible from public R-O-W to be screened.
- H. Are there any guidelines for mailboxes? Many mailboxes outside multifamily units.
- No, however if visible they should be shown on plans submitted to HRB.

IV. CLOSING REMARKS

Tom Thomson reminded of additional meetings to be held April 8, 9, and 10 from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.