

# City Council Announcements

## February 17, 2009

### **A. Information Needed by Council Staff**

1. On City-related issues that generate a high-level volume of comments from the community are compiled by Council staff into a matrix/database format which is commonly emailed to the City Council Members on a weekly/bi-weekly basis.

**Is the Council comfortable with the format and timing regarding Council staff's approach in providing a compiled list of community comments to you?**

2. In the past Council members were given two weeks to review Board Appointment paperwork. Reducing the time given for review would help Council staff schedule appointments in a timelier manner.

**Council staff would like to inquire if Council members would feel comfortable if given one week to review rather than two weeks.**

### **B. For Your Information**

1. Please find attached a brief update from the Administration regarding a Legislative Action (initiated in 2003) requesting review of the City's approach to historic preservation.

The Council received a response from the Administration in February 2005. The attached report addresses concerns raised by the Council during the Administration's presentation and how they are being addressed or included in the Preservation Plan project.

This information may be helpful in the meetings scheduled next week with Council Members and the consultant working on the City's Preservation Plan.

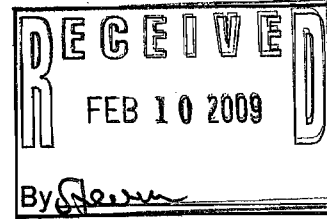
Please let staff know if you have questions or need additional information.



# Communication to the City Council

Community & Economic Development  
Office of the Director

David Everitt, Chief of Staff



Date Received:

Date Sent to City Council: FEB 11, 2009

**TO:** Salt Lake City Council  
Carlton Christensen, Chair

**FROM:** Frank Gray, Community & Economic  
Development Department Director

**DATE:** February 10, 2009

**CC:** Mary DeLaMare-Schaefer, Community & Economic Development Deputy  
Director  
Wilf Sommerkorn, Planning Director  
Pat Comarell, Assistant Planning Director  
Robin Zeigler, Senior Preservation Planner

**RE: PRESERVATION PLAN & CITY COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE INTENT**

In May 2003 there was a Legislative Action from City Council to Planning Staff requesting administration to provide the following information.

1. A written summary of the historic preservation approach presently taken by the Historic Landmark Commission (HLC) including a review of the policies, assumptions, objectives, and philosophies employed in the consideration of projects brought before the HLC. Please include guidelines, in addition to those listed in City ordinance, which provide the basis for such consideration, for example, federal guidelines, professional best practices, etc.
2. An assessment of the City's 1995 decision to change the HLC from an advisory body to a decision-making body, including a review of the pros and cons associated with both approaches.

3. A review of the scope of the Commission's duties, as defined by ordinance, compared with duties that may be presently performed, but are outside the ordinance and the efficacy of such "outside of scope" duties. (For example, the Council Office has received an inquiry about whether it is the role of the Commission to design or redesign projects that are before them for consideration.)
4. An overall evaluation of the extent to which the current ordinance, policies and processes are conducive to creating an effective balance between preservation of historic areas and the natural evolution and maintenance of vibrant neighborhoods as envisioned by the City's development goals. For instance, how does the Commission ensure that historic neighborhoods are provided sufficient flexibility to ensure broad demographic retention and the provision of vital neighborhood services? If so, what changes to the ordinance are necessary to more effectively allow the Commission to create such a balance?
5. How many Planning staff members are needed to carry out the duties and responsibilities associated with the preservation districts, and what level of expertise is necessary?

Those questions were addressed in a document titled "A Review of Salt Lake City's Approach to Historic Preservation: Administration Response to the City Council's Legislative Action" and presented to the City Council in 2004.

The Preservation Plan was a recommendation of the Legislative Intent. Whereas the Legislative Action and Intent were "looking back" to answer questions and to clarify concerns about the processes and provisions then in place, the Preservation Plan is "looking forward" by setting goals and recommending actions for meeting those goals. However, several concerns were voiced by the Council during the presentation of the Intent.

The majority of questions asked was for clarifications and are not included here. The Commission voiced several concerns. Following is a list of those concerns and how they are either currently being addressed or included in the Preservation Plan:

**1. Modern materials should be considered in the design guidelines**

Modern materials are mentioned in the design guidelines but the draft of the Preservation Plan addresses other changes.

**2. Notice to Landmark properties and historic districts about the designation**

Designation is recorded on the properties deed; however, staff has looked at additional ways to notice and remind property owners about the designation. A newsletter was sent out in 2008 and 2009 to all properties with Local Historic Designation. Staff also created a couple of brochures and is working on an informational video that will air regularly on SLCTV and an updated website.

- 3. Do the applicants have to spend a lot of money on architects and designs only to find out that their project does not meet the guidelines.**

The Planning Staff recently changed their policy to require that all new construction in an historic district go to a presubmittal meeting before an application is submitted in the hopes of giving an applicant direction.

- 4. At what point does the objectivity of the ordinance become the subjectivity of the commission? HLC should guide the process and not impose their personal taste.**

Commissioner training has removed this issue and Planning Staff will continue to provide regular training to the commission.

- 5. Economic Hardship**

Changes to the Economic Hardship ordinance are recommended in the Preservation Plan and are already in the works.

- 6. Underlying zoning is incompatible**

Assessing areas of incompatible zoning is a recommendation of the Preservation Plan.

- 7. Whether it is the role of the Commission to design or redesign projects that are before them for consideration.**

The City attorney, Paul Nielsen, is working with the Historic Landmark Commission to ensure they evaluate the proposal before them, and either deny or approve it, rather than redesign it. At the same time, in applications which may be denied as is, the Commission may make suggestions on changes which could lead to approval of the project.

# Memorandum

**Date:** May 6, 2003

**To:** City Council Members

**From:** City Council Member Eric Jergensen

**Re:** Legislative action – Ask the Administration to review Salt Lake City’s approach to historic preservation

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As Council Member for District Three, I am requesting the Council’s support for a Legislative Action Item. The preservation of historic buildings, structures, and landmarks within the City is of utmost importance in order to provide a historic legacy for future generations.

To clarify the Salt Lake City’s approach to historic preservation, I am requesting the following information:

1. A written summary of the historic preservation approach presently taken by the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC), including a review of the policies, assumptions, objectives and philosophies employed in the consideration of projects brought before the HLC. Please include guidelines, in addition to those listed in City ordinance, which provide the basis for such consideration, for example, federal guidelines, professional best practices, etc...
2. An assessment of the City’s 1995 decision to change the HLC from an advisory body to a decision-making body, including a review of the pros and cons associated with both approaches.
3. A review of the scope of the Commission’s duties, as defined by ordinance, compared with duties that may be presently performed but are outside the ordinance and the efficacy of such “outside of scope” duties. (For example, the Council Office has received an inquiry about whether it is the role of the Commission to design or redesign projects that are before them for consideration.)
4. An overall evaluation of the extent to which the current ordinances, policies and processes are conducive to creating an effective balance between preservation of historic areas and the natural evolution and maintenance of vibrant neighborhoods as envisioned by the City’s development goals. For

instance, how does the Commission ensure that historic neighborhoods are provided sufficient flexibility to assure broad demographic retention and the provision of vital neighborhood services? If so, what changes to the ordinance are necessary to more effectively allow the Commission to create such a balance?

5. How many Planning staff members are needed to carry out the duties and responsibilities associated with the preservation districts, and what level of expertise is necessary?