

1.0 Introduction

This manual has been developed primarily for use by the City of Spartanburg Board of Architectural Design and Historic Review in evaluating proposed changes to designated historic districts and buildings. In addition, guidelines contained herein can be used by property owners throughout the community who may be considering rehabilitation or new construction projects. The guidelines are not rigid restrictions but rather should be viewed as standards which, if followed, will result in sound preservation practices.

Design guidelines are a set of criteria which are used to evaluate the appropriateness of proposed changes in local historic districts. The ultimate goal of design guidelines is to protect the visual qualities of historic properties that reflect the history and heritage of that community.

Three historic areas representing commercial, residential, and mill village architecture and landscape architecture have been used to develop the design guidelines contained within this manual. They are the downtown Spartanburg commercial area, the Hampton Heights neighborhood, and Beaumont Mill Village. Analyses of these areas have been used to identify common rehabilitation and new construction issues

for which guidelines are needed. This manual, however, presents basic principles, approaches, and guidelines that will have general application to most of Spartanburg's historic districts and individual buildings that may be designated in the future.

The manual is divided into three sections.

 **Part One: Design Review and Resource Analysis** provides (1) an introduction to the Spartanburg Historic Preservation Ordinance and the design review process in Spartanburg and (2) profiles of the three representative areas including a brief history and an analysis of their historic resources.

 **Part Two: Preservation Principles and Design Guidelines** provides (1) basic preservation principles and design concepts, (2) guidelines for new construction and additions, (3) commercial/institutional rehabilitation guidelines, (4) residential rehabilitation guidelines, (5) mill village rehabilitation guidelines, (6) landscape guidelines, and (7) guidelines for nonhistoric properties.

 **Part Three: Appendices** contains a glossary of terms and a list of resources on maintenance and resource rehabilitation.

A local historic district is a district designated by local ordinance (Spartanburg Historic Preservation Ordinance) that falls under the jurisdiction of a local preservation commission (Board of Architectural Design and Historic Review). A local historic district is generally "overlaid" on existing zoning classifications in a community such that the preservation commission deals only with the appearance of the district and not the uses to which the properties in the district are put.

1.1 Spartanburg Historic Preservation Ordinance

The City of Spartanburg Historic Preservation Ordinance was passed in 1995 by the authority of the Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994. A copy of the ordinance can be obtained from the City of Spartanburg Department of Planning and Community Development. This manual does not serve as a substitute for the ordinance, and any property owner interested in the content of the ordinance should obtain a copy as a supplement to this manual.

The primary purpose of the ordinance is stated to be

... to provide for the preservation and protection of historic and architecturally valuable districts and sites in the City of Spartanburg. Its purpose is to encourage the identification, protection, preservation and enhancement of the unique and special character of defined districts and sites by means of restrictions and conditions governing the right to erect, demolish on whole or in part, or alter the exterior appearance of structures within such areas.

It is important to note that the Ordinance provides for a wide variety of resources to

be locally designated; these include individual landmark buildings, districts, sites, structures, objects (such as the Daniel Morgan statue), and significant landscape features.

Properties currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places are good candidates for local designation as their historic and architectural significance have already been established. At the time of this publication, the City of Spartanburg had six individual buildings listed in the National Register:

Evins-Bivings House
"Bon Haven"
Bishop Duncan House
Cleveland Law Range
Seay House
W. S. Montgomery House



Evins-Bivings House

and four districts:

Downtown Spartanburg
Hampton Heights
Converse College
Wofford College.

Many other historic properties and districts exist that could be locally designated.

The Board of Architectural Design and Historic Review (Board) of the City of Spartanburg, a nine-member commission consisting of licensed professionals and others with a demonstrated interest in relevant fields, has been established as the administrative authority for the ordinance. The ordinance lists nine areas of responsibility for the Board. Of particular interest to these guidelines are their responsibilities to:

- 1 prepare and maintain an inventory of all properties which have the potential for designation as a historic property;
- 2 recommend to City Council specific properties to be designated by the ordinance; and
- 3 review applications for certificates of appropriateness and grant or deny the same in accordance with the provisions of the ordinance.

1.2 Design Review Process

Design Review is the process by which the Board of Architectural Design and Historic Review approves major changes that are planned for locally-designated properties and districts and issues Certificates of Appropriateness which allow the proposed changes to take place.

There is a four-step process for obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness.

 **STEP 1: Determining Whether a Certificate of Appropriateness Is Needed/Schedule Preliminary Meeting with Board Subcommittee (optional)**

 **STEP 2: Submitting an Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to the Board**

 **STEP 3: Board Review of the Application/Public Hearing**

 **STEP 4: Application Approved - Certificate of Appropriateness Issued**
OR

Application Denied - Certificate of Appropriateness Denied

STEP 1: Determining Whether a Certificate of Appropriateness Is Needed/Preliminary Meeting with Board Subcommittee

Once a property or district has been designated, a Certificate of Appropriateness is required for:

(1) all alteration, construction, demolition, or removal requiring a building or demolition permit by the Inspections Department

(2) or for any alteration, construction, demolition, relocation, or removal not requiring a building or demolition permit which changes the “**exterior architectural appearance**” of any designated property or individual properties located within the boundaries of a designated district (including properties considered to be nonhistoric).

Exterior architectural appearance is defined in the Ordinance as

the architectural character and general composition of the exterior of a structure visible from a public street, including, but not limited to, the kind and texture of the building material and the type, design, and character of all windows, doors, light fixtures,

signs, and appurtenant elements.

Application for a building permit will trigger the design review process.

Interior modifications, alterations to exterior features not visible from a public street, and ordinary maintenance and repairs are exempted from review and do not require a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Prior to the preparation of detailed specifications and plans, a property owner can request a meeting with a subcommittee of the Board to review the standards of appropriateness of design that will be required for the planned project. Applications are to be submitted to the Department of Planning and Community Development.

STEP 2: Submitting an Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to the Board

Applications are to be accompanied by drawings, specifications, site plans or layouts, and/or photographs which illustrate existing conditions and adequately illustrate proposed plans. (See Ordinance for more information.)

STEP 3: Board Review of the Application/Public Hearing

All applications for a Certificate shall be reviewed at a public hearing. (See Ordinance for exceptions relating to Minor Works.)

When reviewing applications for alteration or new construction, the Board shall consider the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (see Section 5.3) and the following criteria:

- a) the character and appropriateness of the design;
- b) the scale of the buildings;
- c) the texture and materials;
- d) the relationship of such elements to similar features of structures in the immediate surroundings;
- e) if the property is in an historic district, the extent to which the alteration or construction would be harmonious with the historic district.

This manual will also serve as a tool in reviewing applications.

Property owners may request special consideration based on Economic Hardship. See Ordinance for information and procedures related to such requests.

STEP 4: Application Approved - Certificate of Appropriateness Issued

The Board shall approve or deny an application within 30 days after it has been filed. Failure of the Board to act within this time period shall constitute approval and no other evidence is needed. (See Ordinance for exceptions.)

A Certificate shall expire after six months if the work is not commenced and diligently pursued within that time.

Application Denied - Certificate of Appropriateness Denied

If an application is denied, the Commission will notify the applicant and the Building Inspector in writing of its decision and state the reasons for the denial.

The applicant may make modifications to the plans and may resubmit the application at any time after doing so.

What Makes a Property Historic?

Several **criteria** are used to determine whether a property is historic. They include:

• **Age** - Properties greater than or equal to 50 years old are considered historic.

• **Special Architectural Significance** - Some properties less than 50 years old are considered historic because they possess special architectural significance; for example, they might be the first of a type built; be an exceptionally good example of a particular method of construction or style; or represent the work of a noted architect or master builder.

• **Historic Association** - Some properties less than 50 years old are considered historic because of their association to significant events or persons; for example, properties associated with the Civil Rights movement are now being considered historic at the national level as well as the state and local levels. Another example would be a President's home that is not 50 years old but would certainly be considered historic.

1.3 Purpose of Design Guidelines

Design guidelines are concerned with changes to the external appearance of historic properties and do not affect the use of property which is otherwise regulated through the zoning ordinance and building and development codes. For example, a property owner wishing to renovate his residence for use as an office in an area zoned residential would need to file for rezoning; if proposed changes would alter the exterior appearance of the property, the owner would also have to file a "Request for Certificate of Appropriateness" to obtain permission to make those changes. The Historic Preservation Commission would not, however, comment on the proposed use of the property.

Following is a list of what design guidelines do and what they do not do.

Design Guidelines Do:

- ✿ protect the historic character and integrity of the district
- ✿ provide guidance to design professionals and property owners undertaking construction in the district
- ✿ identify important review concerns and recommend appropriate design approaches
- ✿ provide an objective basis for review, assuring consistency and fairness
- ✿ increase public awareness of the district and its significant characteristics

Design Guidelines Do Not:

- ✿ limit growth or development within the district
- ✿ apply to routine maintenance or to work which does not visibly affect the district, such as interiors
- ✿ dictate stylistic design approaches which are based on individual preference
- ✿ restrict creative design solutions¹

1.4 State and Federal Review Processes

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 - Review of design projects in Spartanburg may also take place at the state and federal levels under two sets of conditions. The first concerns projects with some level of federal involvement (funding or licensing) that will impact one or more historic properties. According to Section 106 of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act, federal agencies must provide the President's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment on the effect of federal, federally-assisted, or federally-licensed projects involving properties either listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Most often it is in fact the State Historic Preservation Office that carries out these reviews. The Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation" is always the criteria for evaluation. The comments made are not binding but merely advisory, although this process has in many cases led to modifications of proposals and more sympathetic treatments of historic resources.

Rehabilitation Tax Incentives - State and federal involvement will also occur when a property owner wishes to take advantage of state and/or federal rehabilitation tax in-

centives or grants. A tax credit is available for qualifying rehabilitation projects, and applicants must submit a two-part application to the State Historic Preservation Office. Part One of this application documents the significance of the property while Part Two is a description of the project. After this documentation has been reviewed at the state level, it is sent on to the National Park Service for a final review and a decision concerning the application for tax credits. Again, the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation" are utilized in these evaluations. Persons desiring further information on the tax incentives for historic preservation projects should contact the State Historic Preservation Office, South Carolina Department of Archives and History.

Local Property Tax Abatement - In 1990 the South Carolina state legislature passed a law allowing municipal and county governments to give property owners tax incentives for the rehabilitation of historic buildings and low and moderate-income rental property. The law, which authorizes local governments to place a temporary ceiling on a property's assessed value, applies to property owners who complete a "substantial rehabilitation" of a historic property in an area where the special tax assessments law has been implemented. Without that temporary ceiling, the improvements made will increase the

property's assessed value and the owner's property taxes. At the time of the completion of these design guidelines, the City of Spartanburg had not passed an ordinance implementing the state law. If at any point in the future the City does pass such an ordinance, all historic properties located in designated local districts would be eligible for the tax abatement program.²

Persons desiring further information on the tax incentives for historic preservation projects should contact the State Historic Preservation Office, South Carolina Department of Archives and History.

1 State Historic Preservation Office, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, "Preservation Hotline," July 1992.

2 State Historic Preservation Office, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, "Fact Sheet 8: Special Property Tax Assessments for Rehabilitated Historic Buildings," March 1994.