



Annual Internal Review

This report covers the time period of 7/1/2016 to 6/30/2017

Historic Landmark Commission

The Board/Commission mission statement (per the City Code) is:

Pursuant to Section 2-1-147(B) of the Code of the City of Austin, the Historic Landmark Commission:

1. Shall prepare and periodically revise an inventory of the structures and areas that may be eligible for designation as historic landmarks.
 2. Shall prepare, review, and propose amendments to the Historic Landmark Preservation Plan.
 3. Shall review requests to establish or remove a historic designation and make recommendations on the requests to the Land Use Commission, as determined in accordance with Section 25-1-46 of the Code of the City of Austin.
 4. Shall provide information and counseling to owners of structures that are designated as historic structures.
 5. May initiate zoning or rezoning of property to establish or remove a historic designation.
 6. May recommend amendments to the Code of the City of Austin relating to historic preservation.
 7. May recommend that the City acquire property if the Commission finds that acquisition by the City is the only means by which to preserve the property.
 8. May advise the Council on matters relating to historic preservation.
 9. For an object that is not permanently affixed to land, may recommend that Council confer special historic designation, and
 10. Shall perform other duties as prescribed by the Code of the City of Austin or other ordinance.
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1. **Describe the board's actions supporting their mission during the previous calendar year. Address all elements of the board's mission statement as provided in the relevant sections of the City Code.**

1. The Commission references several surveys in their evaluation of historical significance for properties subject to applications for demolition permits, relocation permits, and building permits within National Register and locally-designated historic districts. The surveys used by the Commission include the East Austin Survey (1980), the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984), the Clarksville Survey, the 11th and 12th Street East Austin Survey, the Chestnut Neighborhood Survey, and others. Other sources of information for the Commission include lists of contributing (and non-contributing) properties within the City's 15 National Register Historic Districts and 3 locally-designated historic districts.

The biggest accomplishment of this fiscal year was the completion of a comprehensive multi-volume survey and contextual report of East Austin, prepared by a private consultant to the city. The East Austin Historic Structures Survey provides an invaluable tool for identifying and evaluating properties in East Austin for individual landmark designation and the creation of historic districts. The survey also provides a context study of East Austin, in and of itself, as well as its relationship to the entire city, to further aid evaluation and interpretation of historic resources. The consultants provided recommendations for individual designations as historic landmarks and to the National Register of Historic Places, as well as identifying potential historic districts, with maps, context statements, and information on which structures are recommended as contributing to the character of the historic district. The survey has sparked interest and efforts in East Austin to nominate historic districts, and has been used by the City Historic Preservation Office and the Historic Landmark Commission in evaluating applications for building, demolition, and relocation permits. The City Historic Preservation Office will use the survey to reach out to neighborhood residents to encourage designation of individual structures and neighborhoods that tell the story of East Austin, as well as the unified history of the city.

2. The City's Preservation Plan dates from 1981, and is part of the City's Imagine Austin plan, which will incorporate historic preservation elements into the comprehensive plan for the city. City staff and the Commission has been active in the CodeNext process for revising the City's Land Development Code, and the Commission will participate in the proposed Code changes relating to historic preservation.

3. Each month, the Commission reviews applications for historic zoning as part of its regular business at public meetings. In 2016-17, the Commission reviewed nineteen (19) applications for historic zoning. Twelve (12) of those applications were brought to the Commission by the property owner, including three (3) that had originally stemmed from applications for demolition permits, but were converted to voluntary applications for historic zoning instead. The three houses that had owner "conversions" are all in East Austin, and include the home of noted civil rights activists Spencer and Ora Lee Nobles on E. 8th Street. The Commission recommended eleven (11) of the applications owner-initiated applications for historic zoning, and denied one (1). The Commission also reviewed two nominations for local historic districts: Aldridge Place and Ebony Acres. The Commission recommended the Aldridge Place Historic District application; the Ebony Acres application was withdrawn by the proponents. The remainder of the cases seven (7) were initiated by the Commission in response to applications for demolition; none of these were ultimately recommended for historic zoning.



The Spencer and Ora Lee Nobles House, 2008 E 8th Street, originally came to the Commission's attention with an application for demolition. Recognizing the historical significance of the house, the owners then withdrew their demolition application and opted for historic zoning, which was recommended by the Commission in May, 2017. Ora Lee Nobles was very active in the civil rights movement in Austin, and later forged a neighborhood coalition to protect the Blackshear neighborhood and its African-American history.



Aldridge Place, a historic neighborhood north of the University of Texas campus, was designated as a local historic district by the City Council in March, 2017. Aldridge Place contains an eclectic mix of architectural styles, and a rich history. The historic district nomination had overwhelming support from neighborhood residents.

4. The Commission's Certificate of Appropriateness Review Committee is made up of 3 Commission members, representing a wide range of knowledge in terms of architecture and architectural history. The Committee meets monthly (two weeks prior to the full Commission meeting), and provides a preliminary review of applications for Certificates of Appropriateness for designated historic landmarks and for properties within locally-designated historic districts. The Committee will also review applications for building permits in National Register Historic Districts upon request. The Committee reviews an average of six (6) applications each month in an informal setting where the applicant presents the proposal to the Committee members, who then work closely with the applicant to ensure a successful proposal at the full Commission. The Committee has been extremely helpful and effective in guiding applicants towards approval of their applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation as well as the design standards established for locally-designated historic districts.

5. As part of its regular monthly public meetings, the Commission reviews application for the demolition or relocation of potentially historic properties, and may initiate a historic zoning case to gather more information about the history of a property before deciding to recommend the case for historic zoning to the Planning Commission and the City Council. In 2016-17, the

Commission initiated a historic zoning case on seven (7) applications for demolition of a potentially historic structure. None of these cases were ultimately recommended for historic zoning by the Commission.



The ca. 1890 Cherico-Franzetti-Arriaga House, at 1403 E. 6th Street, failed to get the requisite number of votes by the Commission to recommend it for landmark designation. Although still standing at the time of this writing, a demolition permit has been released for this house, the home of two Italian-American immigrant families who operated a neighborhood grocery store next door.

6. The Commission works closely with City staff to identify and process amendments to City Code sections dealing with historic preservation issues.

7. The Commission did not have occasion to recommend that the City acquire property to preserve a property in 2016-17.

8. The Commission recommended historic zoning for eleven (11) properties in 2016-17.

9. The Commission did not have occasion to recommend historic zoning for an object not specifically affixed to land in 2016-17.

10. The Commission did not have occasion to perform other duties as prescribed by Code or ordinance, other than the activities described above.

2. Determine if the board’s actions throughout the year comply with the mission statement.

Every action of the Historic Landmark Commission has complied with the mission statement and applicable City Code sections relating to the Commission and historic preservation in 2016-17.

3. List the board’s goals and objectives for the new calendar year.

(Make sure the goals and objectives fall within the mission statement of the board/commission.)

In addition to continuing the regular work described above, the Commission intends to evaluate the city’s historic district sign ordinance, and improve the effectiveness of historic preservation efforts in Austin, especially in the creation of locally-designated historic districts.

The National Association of Preservation Commissions held a full-day CAMP training for the Commission on June 16, 2017. The Commission is pursuing the recommendations delivered during the training to improve its effectiveness and efficiency.