



D U R H A M

## Historic Preservation Commission

Durham City-County Planning Department ▪ 101 City Hall Plaza ▪ Durham, NC 27701

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March 1, 2013

Dear City Council Members,

Allow me to present the Durham Historic Preservation Commission's Certified Local Government Report for 2012. During this especially busy year, the Commission heard 37 requests for Certificates of Appropriateness with applications coming from all seven of our locally-designated historic districts and several from our locally-designated landmarks. In addition, staff processed 82 administrative Certificates of Appropriateness.

We have continued our focus on streamlining our certificate of appropriateness and quasi-judicial procedures. We have once again expanded the types of work that qualify for administrative review, making the process for the approval of simple changes more efficient for staff, the Commission, and applicants.

Additionally, the Commission is currently working with a consultant to consolidate and update the design guidelines adopted in each local historic district preservation plan. These will be compiled into a single design guidelines document that applies to all properties within local historic districts and all locally-designated landmarks. This new document will not only clarify and streamline the review process for the commission by creating a single document to reference for all projects, but will also provide more thorough explanation of the guidelines and will address modern building types and materials, green-building practices, and work in the right-of-way. These changes will clarify the guidelines for applicants so they can more easily anticipate the decisions of staff and the Commission. The updated design guidelines will eventually be adopted by the City Council.

In response to an increasing number of retroactive COA applications in recent years, the Commission has increased outreach to property owners and stakeholders in our historic districts. We have developed a series of brochures that have been distributed to every owner of these historic properties. The topics range from specific districts, landmark properties, and certificates of appropriateness. Additionally, the Commission has staffed tables at the Cleveland-Holloway and Trinity Park home tours to answer questions from Durham residents about local historic districts and the role of the HPC.

The revised guidelines and outreach are especially important as additional local historic districts are created. The Cleveland-Holloway neighborhood has petitioned for the expansion of the Holloway Street local district to meet the boundaries of the recently designated National Register Historic District. That expansion is set to come

before the Commission, the Planning Commission, and the Durham City Council in 2013. Additionally, the groundwork has already been completed to create a local historic district for the Golden Belt Neighborhood.

I'm very excited to work with a Commission whose mission is more important than ever and whose members and support staff are more focused and dedicated than ever.

Thank you for your continued support,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Heather M. Wagner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Heather M. Wagner, Chair  
Durham Historic Preservation Commission

cc: Lisa Miller, Staff Contact