



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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February 4, 2014

Dear City Council Members,

Allow me to present the Durham Historic Preservation Commission's Certified Local Government Report for 2013. During this especially busy year, the Commission heard 40 requests for Certificates of Appropriateness for Major and Minor Works with applications coming from all seven of our locally-designated historic districts and several from our locally-designated landmarks. In addition, staff processed 88 Administrative Certificates of Appropriateness.

Among these Certificates for Appropriateness were a number of large-scale redevelopment and new development projects within the Downtown Durham Historic District. Despite Design Guidelines that are focused primarily on the rehabilitation of existing structures, I am confident that the Commission has applied the guidelines for new construction appropriately and I look forward to the construction of these buildings and the continued redevelopment of Durham's downtown.

The increased number of COA applications for new construction in both the downtown and residential districts has highlighted the need for revised and consolidated design guidelines for all of Durham's historic districts and landmarks. The Commission shares your desire for the swift, yet thoughtful, preparation and implementation of updated Design Guidelines that will not only clarify and streamline the review process for the commission by creating a single document to reference for all types of rehabilitation and new construction projects, but will also clarify the guidelines for applicants so they can more easily work with the Planning staff and the Commission throughout the application process. Additionally, this new document will provide a more thorough explanation of the updated guidelines, as well as addressing how modern building types and materials, green-building practices, and work in the public right-of-way can be achieved while working within the context of historic preservation.

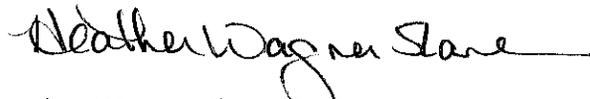
The Commission is concerned with the length of time it has taken to prepare the Holloway Street Local Historic District Expansion and the Golden Belt

Local Historic District, both of which were requested by the neighborhoods several years ago. We agree that the revised Design Guidelines should be in place before any additional properties are designated. However, we urge the Council and staff to make the designation of these districts a priority in their work plans moving forward.

In 2013, the Commission has focused on the training of new and returning commissioners. In April 2013, all Commission members attended a day-long training by members of the National Alliance for Preservation Commissions's Commission Assistance and Mentoring Program (CAMP). Topics covered included Preservation Law and Procedural Due Process, Design Review and Design Guidelines, and Public Education and Outreach. Unfortunately, no City Council members or County Commissioners were able to attend the training, though Keith Chadwell, Deputy City Manager, was in attendance.

As we move into 2014, one of the goals of the Commission is to develop stronger working relationships with the City Council and County Commissioners. The long-term strength and vitality of Durham's downtown and historic neighborhoods is a priority for all of us. While we may have different strengths and foci, working together we can achieve this goal.

Thank you for your continued support,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather Wagner Slane". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Heather Wagner Slane, Chair
Durham Historic Preservation Commission

cc: Lisa Miller, Staff Contact