



Legislation Details (With Text)

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HLC#21-013: Discussion regarding revisions to the Design Guidelines for Downtown Mansfield

At the last meeting, Staff requested that the Commissioners review the design guidelines from Mansfield and several other cities. Staff is seeking the Commission’s comments about these design guidelines on features that the Commissioners liked or did not like. As we update our guidelines, these features may be incorporated into the draft.

The Design Guidelines for Downtown Mansfield were written in 1991 and intended mainly for use by the historic commercial buildings of N. Main Street. There have been many changes over the last 30 years and the downtown area has expanded beyond the original two blocks on Main Street. In addition, there are discrepancies between the guidelines and the desired outcomes for preservation projects.

For example, Section 5(E) on new construction states “Do not duplicate, replicate, or copy a historic architectural style in new construction. Use compatible contemporary architectural designs. Ornaments and details should be simple.” Following this standard, an infill project on Main Street could look like the building on the right in the attached exhibit.

Staff recommends that the Design Guidelines be updated to meet the needs of today’s historic property owners and infill developers. A review of other cities’ guidelines presents some elements to consider in an update, including:

- Updated introduction
- Using the guidelines
- Project planning
- New construction
- Updated glossary
- Emphasize the 3 steps in the review of restoration projects

While many of the current principles of the Design Guidelines are still applicable, they can be emphasized using new graphics and photographs to show appropriate and inappropriate treatments. The guidelines should be written in clear, concise and user-friendly language.

Staff will take comments on the guidelines at the meeting.