

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



To: Jim Scholl, City Manager

Through: Thaddeus Cohen, Planning Director

From: Enid Torregrosa-Silva, Historic Preservation Planner

Meeting Date: May 17, 2016

RE: Proposed revisions of HARC Guidelines for Additions and Alterations.

ACTION STATEMENT:

Request: **AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF KEY WEST, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMISSION'S GUIDELINES FOR ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS AS REFERENCED IN SECTION 90-142 OF THE LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF INCONSISTENT PROVISIONS; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

Location: Key West Historic District and buildings outside of the historic district listed as contributing.

BACKGROUND:

During the past months the historic architectural review commission (HARC) initiated modifications to the Historic Architectural Guidelines to clarify and strengthen the review process when a citizen submits a Certificate of Appropriateness application that proposes additions and alterations for buildings within the historic district and contributing structures outside of the historic district. The new proposed guidelines for "*Additions and Alterations*" provides informative guidance to citizens and general public on the appropriateness of proposing additions and alterations of buildings without affecting the character of the main structure and surrounding neighborhood.

Since 2002, the HARC Guidelines are incorporated by reference into the Land Development Regulations, Section 90-142, and therefore are regulatory tools. Any amendment to the Guidelines must follow the same process as an amendment to the Land Development Regulations.

Previous City Actions:

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|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Planning Board Approval | April 21, 2016 |
| HARC Recommendation of Approval | February 23, 2016 |

Planning Staff Analysis:

The new guidelines are an educational tool for anyone that references them, as they clearly explain the objectives and goals for each regulation. These proposed guidelines are more comprehensive than the actual ones and they provide vast and clear information as to the importance of understanding the urban context and to the building to which new additions and alterations are proposed. The actual guidelines are eight (8) sentences. New additions and alterations of buildings and structures can adversely affect the character and integrity of the building which will be affected and its surrounding context, therefore precise and clear guidelines will help not only the citizens to understand HARC's main objectives, but will make the review process more effective.

It is the intent of the HARC members to create guidelines for new construction that are based on national preservation principles and that can be applied to all building types; commercial, residential, governmental and institutional. Current regulations for additions and alterations are open to interpretation and subjective opinions. The new proposed guidelines are specific to each addition and alteration principle.

Options/Advantages/Disadvantages:

Option 1: Approve the proposed changes to guidelines for Additions and Alterations.

- 1. Consistency with the City's Strategic Plan, Vision, and Mission:** This action would provide clear regulations that promotes and protects the historic character and quality of the historic district and contributing buildings outside of the district, which is consistent with the mission and vision of the City.
- 2. Financial Impact:** There will be no direct finance impact. Nevertheless, the approval of the proposed ordinance will improve the efficiency of staff and the HARC members when reviewing an application, which will streamline the City's plans review process.

Option 2: Do not approve the proposed change to guidelines for New Construction.

- 1. Consistency with the City's Strategic Plan, Vision, and Mission:** This action would not be consistent with the City's strategic plan, as the current additions and alterations guidelines lacks of specific and objective regulations much needed when reviewing proposed projects.
- 2. Financial Impact:** There will be no direct finance impact. Nevertheless, by not approving the proposed ordinance, the city will not solve current problem HARC members and staff are dealing when reviewing applications with vague and subjective regulations pertaining additions and alterations.

Recommendation

The Planning Department recommends, Option 1, **approval** of the proposed Ordinance setting the proposed changes of Additions and Alterations guidelines.