

MEMORANDUM

TO:

PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM:

STEPHANIE DEWOLFE, AICP, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF

PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

DATE:

OCTOBER 24, 2012

SUBJECT:

REVISIONS TO SECOND GUIDING PRINCIPLE ON HISTORIC

PRESERVATION AND CHANGE

Planning staff presented a revision to the General Plan's second guiding principle to the City Council, Planning Commission, Transportation Advisory Commission, and Historic Preservation Commission. Based on the feedback from these groups and other members of the community – including Pasadena Heritage – staff offers the following revision for the Planning Commission's consideration. The revised recommendation addresses comments received by staff in its most recent set of public meetings by providing both a general vision and specific standards; addressing the citywide issue of enhancing the City's sense of place while addressing historic resources; and in replacing ambiguous terms such as "old" with terms and standards well defined in the historic preservation community.

FINAL DRAFT Recommendation

Pasadena's historic resources will be preserved. Citywide, new development will be in harmony with and enhance Pasadena's unique character and sense of place. New construction that could affect the integrity of a historic resource will be compatible with, and differentiated from, the existing resource and will further adhere to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

Analysis

The revised language begins with a direct statement supporting the preservation of our historic resources. This has been consistently supported in the most recent set of public meetings.

The second statement is general and applicable citywide. It goes beyond the issue of preservation and addresses community and Commission concerns related to protecting Pasadena's unique character and its sense of place.

The third statement consolidates the second and third sentences previously reviewed by the Planning Commission. It provides a more specific statement related to changes that would affect historic resources. The Historic Preservation Commission strongly supported language that would provide specifics and address the issue of context. The statement moves away from the word "adjacent" (which is imprecise) found in the version previously reviewed by the Planning Commission. Instead, it shifts the focus to changes that could affect any of the seven aspects of integrity (location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association).

This change eliminates the need to define adjacency and it narrows the discussion to defined terms, of which integrity is one of the most clearly defined in the preservation vernacular. Finally, staff recommends the inclusion of a direct reference to the Secretary of the Interior Standards.

The Historic Preservation Commission, at its meeting on October 15, provided a recommendation on revised language for the second guiding principle (see below). Based on that discussion and feedback from recent public meetings, staff offers its Final Draft Recommendation. The acting chair of Historic Preservation Commission, Andrea Rawlings, reviewed staff's Final Draft Recommendation and verified that it was in keeping with the intent and scope of the Historic Preservation Commission's version. The staff of Pasadena Heritage has reviewed the language, as well, and provided its support.

For comparison purposes, please find below previous versions of the second guiding principle.

Existing Text (1994)

Change will be harmonized to preserve Pasadena's historic character and environment. Citywide design principles will be established so that new development blends with old; historically and architecturally significant buildings will be preserved; new public spaces will be acquired; and we will act as stewards of our natural environment.

Pasadena Heritage Proposal (2009)

Pasadena's historic resources will be preserved, and change will be harmonized to enhance Pasadena's historic character and environment. (No changes to remaining statements in the Principle)

Presented to City Council (October 1, 2012), Planning Commission (October 10, 2012) and Historic Preservation Commission (October 15, 2012)

Pasadena's historic resources will be preserved. New development within an historic district or adjacent to an individual resource will be compatible with, yet distinct from, the existing historic resources. Historic districts will retain their character and allow for new construction and additions that are sensitively designed.

Historic Preservation Commission Recommendation (October 15, 2012)

Pasadena's historic resources will be preserved. New development will harmonize with and enhance Pasadena's unique character and sense of place. New construction within a historic district or adjacent to an individual resource will be compatible with, yet distinct from, the existing historic resources.