

HISTORIC RESOURCE PROTECTION AND THE HISTORIC REVIEW COMMISSION

The purpose of the Historic Review Commission is to support the City of Erie in their efforts to protect some of this community's most valuable and important assets including the historical, cultural and aesthetic heritage of the City of Erie as they are seen as essential to the promotion of the health, prosperity and general welfare of the people. The initiative including changes to the Zoning Ordinance, the Historic Review Commission and any future preservation plans is referred to as the Historic Resource Protection Program.

The purpose of the Historic Resource Protection Program is to:

1. Stimulate revitalization of the business districts and historic neighborhoods and to protect and enhance local historic and aesthetic attractions to tourists and thereby promote and stimulate business;
2. Enhance the opportunities for federal or state tax benefits under relevant provisions of federal or state law;
3. Provide for the designation, protection, preservation and rehabilitation of historic properties and historic districts to participate in federal or state programs to do the same;
4. Promote the retention of community character through preservation of the local heritage by recognition and protection of historic and cultural resources;
5. Establish a clear process by which proposed changes affecting historic resources are reviewed;
6. Mitigate the negative effects of proposed changes affecting historic resources;
7. Encourage the continued use of historic resources and facilitate their appropriate rehabilitation and adaptive reuse;
8. Encourage pleasing and harmonious relationship between old and new buildings and structures that will maintain and strengthen the architectural character of historic districts;
9. Implement the following sections of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code: 603(g)(2) which states that "zoning ordinances shall provide for protection of natural historic features and resources"; 604 (1) which states that "the provisions of zoning ordinances shall be designed to promote, protect and facilitate any or all of the following: . . . preservation of the natural, scenic and historic values. . . ."; and 605 (2) (vi) whereby uses and structures at or near places having unique historical, architectural or patriotic interest or value may be regulated.

HISTORIC REVIEW COMMISSION TERMS, ROLES AND RESPONSABILITIES

Historic Review Commission (HRC) is a newly created, seven-member board with five citizen members who are voting members, the majority of whom shall reside in the City of Erie, and two ex-officio members representing the City who are non-voting members. Two membership positions and the ex-officio members shall be appointed by the Mayor, and three members shall be appointed by City Council. Members shall have the following background:

1. One member shall be a professional preservationist or an architectural historian active with a broad-based local organization involved with historic preservation and/or history;
2. One member shall be an architect who has an interest and background in historic preservation;
3. One member shall be recommended by the Erie County Board of Realtors and this representative shall be selected to fairly represent the viewpoints of the Real Estate sales community.
4. Two membership positions shall be any two citizens who have demonstrated an outstanding

interest and/or knowledge of historic preservation and restoration in the City of Erie.

5. Two Ex-officio members shall be appointed by the Mayor and shall include one staff from the Department of Planning and Neighborhood Resources and one member of the Planning Commission. These are non-voting positions and are designed to provide support and advice to the HRC.

The responsibilities of the Historic Review Commission shall be to:

1. Investigate and report on the appropriateness of structures, districts, sites and objects which are being considered by City Council for historic designation and to make recommendations to the Council about approval or disapproval of such designations.
2. Review all demolition permit, building permit and sign permit applications involving new construction or exterior alteration of Historic Resources or structures in Historic Districts and make determinations concerning the appropriateness of the work proposed in such permit applications.
3. See that appropriate standards and guidelines are established for each proposed Historic District and see that the residents of the geographical area being considered for designation are involved in developing and amending those standard guidelines for their district.
4. Seek recommendations from community groups on decisions involving applications for approval within the respective districts.
5. Carry on educational activities in furtherance of the purpose of this Article and preservation plans for the City of Erie.
6. Act in an advisory role to City departments and agencies related to preservation matters.
7. Facilitate the redevelopment of historic structures and districts in accordance with approved development plans of the city.
8. Act as liaison on behalf of the City with preservation organizations, professional societies, community and other groups, private property owners, and interested citizens, concerning conservation of the historic resources of the city.
9. Act as a liaison on behalf of the City with State Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Officer, agencies of the federal government, the National Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, concerning the historic resources of the city.
10. Prepare plans for the conservation and development of historic resources in conjunction with the Erie Planning Commission.
11. Undertake or encourage and facilitate the documentation of the architecture and history of the City's historic resources.

Terms

1. Since this is a newly established board, the initial terms will be staggered with one member serving for one year, two members for two years, and two members for three years. After the inaugural term is expired, each Commission member shall serve a three-year term of office.
2. Ex-Officio members shall serve in perpetuity unless they leave office or are replaced by the Mayor.