



Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

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MEMO

DATE: July 29, 2022

TO: Portland Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC)

FROM: Brandon Spencer-Hartle (BPS)

SUBJECT: Potential Amendments to the South Portland Historic District Design Guidelines and HLC Recommendation to City Council

Following the close of oral and written testimony on July 11 and July 15, respectively, HLC members were invited to identify potential amendments to the Proposed Draft South Portland Historic District Design Guidelines. On July 25, the HLC held a work session to discuss and refine those potential amendments. No action was taken at the July 25 work session and the item was continued to August 8 for further Commission consideration of potential amendments and a possible recommendation vote.

BPS staff have assembled a list of potential amendments to the Proposed Draft as requested by HLC Commissioners. Each of the potential amendments are detailed in the pages that follow. To be incorporated into the Recommended Draft, an amendment requires a motion, second, and majority vote of the Commission.

Following consideration of each potential amendment, the HLC may take action to recommend the amended South Portland Historic District Design Guidelines to City Council. The HLC's recommendation should include the following actions:

- Direct staff to refine images and background text in the South Portland Historic District Design Guidelines document, as necessary; and
- Recommend that City Council adopt the South Portland Historic District Design Guidelines, as amended.

Following the HLC's recommendation vote, BPS staff requests the commission prepare a transmittal letter addressed to City Council that will accompany the Recommended Draft Design Guidelines.

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AMENDMENT #1

Amend background documentation, including text and images, throughout the Design Guidelines document

Amendment #1 directs staff to make several amendments to the text and images included in the South Portland Historic District Design Guidelines document. Amendment #1 does not change the land use approval criteria contained in chapter 3 of the Design Guidelines document.

Amend the design guideline document as follows:

- **Incorporate a map of the South Portland Historic District with caption describing the map as a snapshot in time.**
- **Replace in-text use of decimal points with text to ensure readability (i.e. replace “2.5 stories” with “two and a half stories”).**
- **Provide additional context on and references to underrepresented histories in Chapter 2, as available.**
- **Replace image on page 19 with a more representative example of a craftsman/bungalow style building.**

AMENDMENT #2

Revise Design Guideline 1.3: Natural, Cultural and Social History.

Amendment #2 makes a minor change to the Guideline 1.3 approval criterion to ensure that “natural, cultural, and social history” is specific to South Portland.

Amendment 2: Replace Guideline 1.3 with the following:

The natural, cultural, and/or social history of South Portland should be integrated into the design or programming of new buildings greater than 10,000 square feet in floor area and into infrastructure projects.

AMENDMENT #3A and 3B

Revise Design Guideline 3.3: Additions and Alterations to Buildings Built Outside of the Period of Significance.

Amendment #3 changes the Guideline 3.3 approval criterion to provide limits on the scale of additions that can be considered without triggering the guidelines for new construction. Two alternatives are presented below—Amendment 3A and Amendment 3B. Amendment 3A provides an 800 square foot size threshold for such additions. Amendment 3B provides a size threshold proportional to the size of the existing building for such additions.

Amendment 3A: Replace Guideline 3.3 with the following:

Additions to buildings built outside the period of significance should meet Guideline 3.4—Architectural Features and Materials in New Buildings—if the addition is greater than 800 square feet in floor area. Additions 800 square feet or less in floor area and other alterations to buildings built outside the period of significance should either: 1) relate to the design, proportions, and materials of the existing building as originally built or 2) meet Guideline 3.4—Architectural Features and Materials in New Buildings.

Amendment 3B: Replace Guideline 3.3 with the following:

Additions to buildings built outside the period of significance should meet Guideline 3.4—Architectural Features and Materials in New Buildings—if the addition is equal to or greater in floor area than the floor area of the existing building. Additions of floor area less than the floor area of the existing building and other alterations to buildings built outside the period of significance should either: 1) relate to the design, proportions, and materials of the existing building as originally built or 2) meet Guideline 3.4—Architectural Features and Materials in New Buildings.

AMENDMENT #4

Revise Design Guideline 3.4: Architectural Features and Materials in New Buildings.

Amendment #4 changes the Guideline 3.4 approval criterion to provide greater specificity on the materiality of siding that visually appears as wood.

Amendment 4: Replace Guideline 3.4 with the following:

New buildings should exhibit fine-grained texture and depth in cladding, doors, windows, and architectural features. New buildings expressing a house, plex, or mixed-use typology should predominately be clad in wood siding or siding with the appearance, texture, depth, and durability of wood. New buildings expressing an institutional building typology should predominately be clad in brick, stucco, or wood siding or siding with the appearance, texture, depth, and durability of wood. Windows, doors, and storefront systems should be recessed from the exterior cladding and be made of wood or a material with the appearance, texture, profile, and durability of wood.

AMENDMENT #5

Revise Design Guideline 3.5: Tall New Buildings.

Amendment #5 changes the Guideline 3.4 approval criterion to clarify that design features, not massing, is the subject of the design guideline. Amendment #5 also changes the threshold for “tall” from “35 feet”

to “greater than three stories.” Finally, Amendment #5 incorporates consideration of adjacent contributing resources into the approval criterion.

Amendment 5 Replace Guideline 3.5 with the following:

New buildings greater than three stories in height should be coherent expressions of the mixed-use or institutional building typology and employ design features that minimize the appearance of height and respond to any immediately adjacent contributing resources.