

CONSERVATION DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES

PART ONE: OVERVIEW

DESIGN REVIEW

The Jackson-Madison County Historic Zoning Commission is responsible for reviewing new construction in the conservation districts to see that it is compatible in scale, setback, siting and placement of accessory buildings with the existing houses in the historic district. A Certificate of Appropriateness from the Jackson-Madison County Historic Zoning Commission is required before building begins.

The Historic Zoning Commission planning staff prefers to meet with the homeowner and builder at pre-design stages to become familiar with the site and discuss the guidelines. This will help assure that the site plan; preparations and details will have a comfortable relationship to the surrounding homes that have earned the district historic conservation status. For anyone planning to add to an existing structure, the commission reviews habitable additions visible from the street. Houses moved into the area also come under review, and no house can be demolished until reviewed by the commission. In each of these cases, a certificate of appropriateness is required. Interior changes, exterior alterations, paint colors and routine building maintenance and repair are not reviewed.

WHAT IS CONSERVATION ZONING

Conservation Zoning is a tool to protect the architectural character of Jackson's historic neighborhoods by managing growth and change. It is an overlay zoning, applied in addition to the base or land use zoning of an area. Generally, neighborhood residents initiate the process of acquiring conservation zoning. After extensive public input, a recommendation for approval by the Jackson – Madison County Historic Zoning Commission and the Jackson Municipal Regional Planning Commission, and the approval through two (2) readings of the Jackson City Council, an area may be designated a "Historic-Cultural-Conservation (H-C-C) District".

Conservation Zoning protects a district from the loss of architecturally or historically important buildings; new construction not in character with the neighborhood; and additions to buildings that would lessen their architectural importance. These goals are accomplished by requiring that an architectural review board, the Jackson-Madison County Historic Zoning Commission, review plans for demolition, new construction, and major new additions.

HOW HISTORIC ZONING FITS IN: (a typical example)

- 1) Owner decides to build in a Conservation District
- 2) Owner meets with his/her designer to go over guidelines
- 3) Preliminary meeting with Historic Zoning planning staff
- 4) Submit application for review with:
Site plan, Measured Drawings, and Material Information
- 5) Commission Reviews Application
- 6) When approved owner receives Certificate of Appropriateness
- 7) Obtain building permits
- 8) Begin construction

HOW DO I GET A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS?

- 1) Call the Jackson Regional Planning Department at 901/425-8286 to obtain an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness and to make an appointment to meet with the staff.

Staff members will meet with you to discuss your project, answer any questions about conservation zoning, and advise you as to whether or not your plans will meet the design guidelines. The staff can guide you in making your plans meet the guidelines.

When you submit your completed application, the staff will determine whether the work requires referral to the Commission for a Certificate of Appropriateness (see chart). Regular meetings are scheduled for the third Monday of every month.

PRESERVATION PERMITS AND BUILDING PERMITS REQUIRED:

TYPE OF WORK	PRESERVATION PERMIT REQUIRED		BUILDING PERMIT (issued by building dept)
	(reviewed by staff)	(reviewed by HZC)	
Interior Any work conducted (Wiring, Plumbing, painting, Remodeling, etc.)	NO	NO	YES
Color Paint or material colors	NO	NO	NO
General Maintenance Re-roofing, replacing rotten Wood, stripping, painting, etc.	NO	NO	YES
Landscaping Any type (tree removal, planting, shrubs, walkways, etc.)	NO	NO	NO
Fencing Any type (Must meet zoning requirements)	NO	NO	YES
New Construction Primary building Secondary building (garage, shed, etc.)	YES	YES	YES
Addition Major addition (major room addition, dormer, porch, etc.)	YES	YES	YES
Demolition (in whole or part)	YES	YES	YES

- 2) Take the Certificate of Appropriateness to the Jackson Building Department. The Building Official is responsible for ensuring that the structure conforms to the regular zoning, and building code regulations. Building permit fees (amount charged) depends on the type and value of the work to be done.

There is a \$50.00 filing fee for a hearing with the Historic Zoning Commission for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

PART TWO: THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

PURPOSE

Design Guidelines are criteria and standards which the Jackson – Madison County Historic Zoning Commission must consider in determining the appropriateness of proposed work within a historic district. Appropriateness of work must be determined in order to accomplish the goals of historic conservation zoning.

NEW CONSTRUCTION

Definition: The construction or erection of any free standing structure or improvement on any lot, within the District, including new construction which utilizes existing party walls and any additions to existing buildings which are subject to review by the Jackson – Madison County Historic Zoning Commission.

General Principles

These provisions shall apply to the exterior of buildings, to areas of lots visible from public rights-of-way, and especially to principle elevations of buildings.

The principal facades (front) and street-related elevations of proposals for new buildings shall be more carefully reviewed than other facades.

Design Characteristics for New Constructions

Height

New buildings should be constructed to the same number of stories and to a height that is compatible with the height of adjacent buildings. The height of the foundation wall, porch roof, and main roofs should all be compatible with those of surrounding historic buildings.

Scale

The size of a new building; its mass in relation to open spaces; and its windows, doors, openings, and porches should be visually compatible with the surrounding buildings.

Setback and Rhythm of Spacing

The setback from front and side yard property lines established by adjacent buildings must be maintained. When a definite rhythm along a street is established by uniform lot width and building width, infill new buildings should maintain that rhythm.

Relationship of Materials, Textures, and Details

The relationship and use of materials, textures, and details of a new building's public facades shall be visually compatible with and similar to those of adjacent buildings, or shall not contrast conspicuously.

Roof Shape

The roofs of new buildings shall be visually compatible, by not contrasting greatly, with roof shape and orientation of surrounding buildings. The pitch, or slope, of roofs on new buildings should be compatible with those of surrounding historic buildings.

Orientation

The site orientation of new buildings shall be consistent with that of adjacent buildings and shall be visually compatible. Directional expression shall be compatible with surrounding buildings, whether that expression is vertical, horizontal, or non-directional.

Proportion and Rhythm of Openings

The relationship of width to height of windows and doors and the rhythm of solids (walls) to voids (door and window openings) in new buildings shall be visually compatible with the surrounding buildings.

ADDITIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS

Definition: In Conservation Districts, only those additions considered being major additions are reviewed by the commission. A major addition is defined as additions that involve the principle façade, the enclosure of carports, porches, and other covered areas, and/or exterior additions that exceed twenty (20) percent of the existing square footage of the structure.

General Principles

New additions to existing buildings should be kept to a minimum and should be compatible in scale, materials, and texture; additions should not be visually jarring or contrasting.

Additions should not be made to the public facades of existing buildings. Additions may be located to the rear of existing buildings in ways that do not disturb the public facades. If permitted at all, additions should be kept to a minimum and should be visually compatible in scale, materials, and texture.

Additions must not imitate earlier styles or periods of architecture.

The creation of an addition through the enclosure of a front facade porch is inappropriate and should be avoided. However, if permitted, it should be accomplished in a manner that preserves the original character of the original public facade.

Additions should follow all New Construction Guidelines.

DEMOLITION

Definition: The complete or partial tearing down of a building, or structure or the removal of a building, or structure from the District.

General Principles

Since the purpose of historic zoning is to protect historic properties, the demolition of a building or structure that contributes historically or architecturally to the character and significance of the District is inappropriate and should be avoided.

Guidelines for Proposed Demolition

Demolition is inappropriate:

If a building is of such architectural or historical interest and value that its removal would be detrimental to the public interest; or

If a building is of such old or unusual or uncommon design and materials that it could not be reproduced without great difficulty or expense; or

If its proposal replacement would make a less positive visual contribution to the district, would disrupt the character of the district, or would be visually incompatible.

Demolition is appropriate:

If a building has lost its architectural and historical integrity and importance and its removal will not result in a more negative, less appropriate visual effect on the district;

If a building does not contribute to the historical or architectural character and importance of the district and its removal will result in a more positive, appropriate visual effect on the district.

If a building poses a threat to the life, safety, and health to its inhabitants or those of the surrounding neighborhood, as justified by a Housing Code inspection by the Jackson Building Department.

APPEALS

Any applicant who has petitioned the Jackson-Madison County Historic Zoning Commission may appeal the Commission's decision for review by the U.S. Chancery Court as specified under the provisions set forth under State Law (T.C.A. 13-7-409) -- Appeal of historic zoning commission decisions.

These guidelines are produced using material previously published by the:

Office of Planning and Development, Memphis, TN
Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission, Nashville, TN