

HISTORIC PRESERVATION CODE CHANGES

Phase 1: Previously-Adopted Changes

Demolition/Alteration Appeals:

Buildings 50+ years
Community Development Director & Landmark Preservation Commission Chair

- Determine if landmark eligible
- Determine if work damages landmark eligibility

Previously:

- Public not informed
- Final plans required
- No appeal of either determination
- Two LPC Hearings

Now:

- Notify public
 - Sign on property (14 days), newspaper notice & webpages/listserves
- Owner or citizen may appeal determinations
 - of Landmark Eligibility
 - of Effect of Work on Eligibility
- If appealed:
 - Professional determination, paid for by appellant
 - Final plans not required
 - One LPC hearing

Landmark Preservation Commission Experience

Previously:

- Minimum of three members in preservation related fields

Now:

- Minimum of four members in preservation related fields

Why?

- Meet state & federal requirements (LPC member experience)
- Improves demolition/alteration review process
- Provides ability to appeal decision
- Notifies and informs public
- Shortens process



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Phase 2: Historic Preservation Program Comprehensive Review

What did the review include?

- Professional consultant assessment of the program
- Citizen's advisory committee
- Comparison of best practices in the state and nation
- Survey of 2,800 citizens about demolition/alteration review
- Outreach with:
 - Community groups
 - Boards and Commissions
 - City Council
 - Citizens

Proposed Improvements

- Improve transparency/readability of the Code
- Landmark Designation Process
- Historic Review Processes:
 - Demolition/Alteration Review (buildings 50+ years old that are not Landmarks)
 - Design Review (Landmarks)
 - Development Review (development affecting Landmark-eligible buildings)
- Additional enhancements

Why?

- Continuous innovation and improvement
- Fulfill our mission to protect, enhance & preserve meaningful pieces of Fort Collins' heritage
- Predictable, transparent & responsive processes



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Proposed Code Changes

Landmark Preservation Code (Municipal Code Chapter 14)

Now:

- Code is difficult to understand
- Steps are not described sequentially; few explanations or references given
- Building's context (surroundings) not a consideration in Landmark Eligibility
- Determinations of Landmark Eligibility valid for 1 year

Proposed:

- Reorganized sections; steps better grouped in sequential order
- Explanations added for clarity
- References to Secretary of the Interior and National Park Service criteria and standards
- Building's context added as a consideration in determining Landmark Eligibility
- Determination valid for 5 years

Landmark Designation Process (Municipal Code Chapter 14-21(a))

Now:

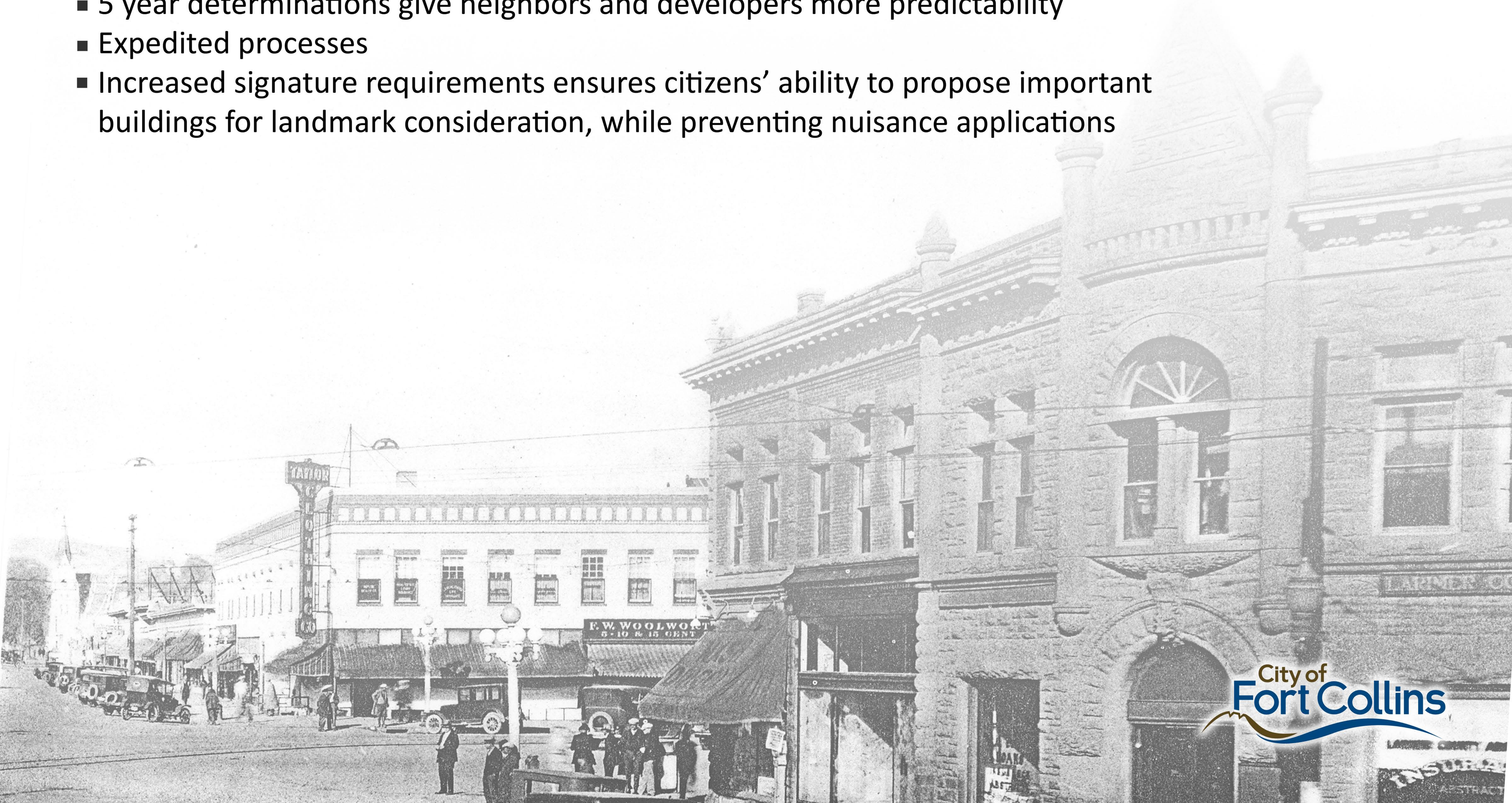
- Only one signature required on application for consideration of Landmark Designation

Proposed:

- When applicant is the the property owner, require a minimum of three, unrelated Fort Collins citizens to sign application

Why?

- Changes increase understanding, transparency, readability
- Addition of context encourages preservation of neighborhood character
- Fewer historic remnants, i.e. single historic building surrounded by new development
- 5 year determinations give neighbors and developers more predictability
- Expedited processes
- Increased signature requirements ensures citizens' ability to propose important buildings for landmark consideration, while preventing nuisance applications



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Proposed Code Changes

Demolition/Alteration Review Process

Applies to buildings 50+ years that are not Landmarks

Now:

- Community Development Director & LPC Chair:
 - Determine if building is Landmark eligible
 - If eligible, determine if work damages eligibility
 - If so, applicant may meet with LPC Design Review Committee
 - If a solution for all parties is identified, still must continue with entire process:
 - Property referred to full commission for hearing
 - Submit required plans
 - Professional documentation of building
 - \$250 fee
 - Once submittal received, minimum 30 days for public notice
 - Hearing held at first regular meeting after 30-day public notice
 - LPC options at hearing: approve, or request council designate building

Proposed:

- Determine first if work is Minor or Major
- If Major, determine building's eligibility and effect of work on eligibility
- If work damages eligibility, must meet with LPC Design Review Committee
 - Free, professional advice from LPC architects, contractors, historians
 - No obligation to follow advice
- If all agree on solution, approval by Community Development Director
- If no agreeable solutions, continue with existing process

Why?

- Most work reviewed is minor and will not have a significant effect on eligibility; no benefit from additional process
- LPC Design Review Committee familiar with historic contextual design
- LPC Design Review Committee meetings find agreeable solution 80% of the time
- Shortens process
- Encourages context sensitive designs compatible with neighborhoods
- Retains buildings' Landmark eligibility



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Proposed Code Changes

Design Review Process (applies to Landmarks)

Now:

- Community Development Director may only approve changes to paint colors, awnings, signage, and minor alterations that don't remove, cover, alter, or destroy any significant building fabric

Proposed:

- Director could approve additional alterations on Landmark buildings
- Could only approve alterations not affecting significant building fabric
Examples: egress windows, roofing permits, storm windows, in-kind repairs, decks and small additions on non-primary elevations

Why?

- Additional process not beneficial if change would not affect significant building fabric
- Would save necessity of receiving LPC approval at regular meeting
- Approval in days, instead of weeks; saves applicant and City time & money

Development Review Process (Land Use Code)

Applies to Land Use Code (LUC) projects affecting Landmark-eligible and designated properties

Now:

- LUC projects reviewed by historic preservation staff; staff provides comments & recommendations to decision maker; no LPC review

Proposed:

- Ability for LPC to review development projects affecting Landmark-eligible & designated properties
- LPC would provide recommendation to decision maker (decision maker may ignore recommendation).

Why?

- Decision maker rarely familiar with historic preservation
- Provides relevant, important information to decision maker
- LPC is City's qualified historic review board
- Complies with state and federal historic review requirements
- Less state review required



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Additional Program Enhancements Underway

Additional historic property surveys. A survey of a potential historic property offers transparency, in the information used to establish eligibility; and, when completed by a professional, its conclusion offers strong predictability of a property's potential eligibility.

Staff is developing a curriculum to provide online and classroom training to local contractors and architects on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties; this will enhance transparency and predictability, and encourage compatible design.

In partnership with other city departments, staff is investigating the development of an "incentives clearinghouse." This would enable citizens to be able to find all building-related incentives in one location.

The 2014 Old Town Historic District Design Standards will include a comprehensive discussion on recent innovations in materials and technology to enhance energy sustainability while still retaining historic character. This document will be made available on-line and in print. Visit the historic preservation website to view the draft document at:

<http://www.fcgov.com/historicpreservation>

Encourage appropriate energy retrofits of older building stock with financial incentives.

Developing podcasts, walking/biking tours, and neighborhood histories.

Adding links to pattern books, demonstrating compatible development.

Updating historic review process handout (also available on-line).

Developing interactive GIS maps identifying the locations of Landmark properties and historic districts. These maps will offer search capabilities, enabling a citizen to select any parcel and search for designated properties within a chosen distance.

Enhancing the historic preservation web site. Determinations of eligibility are now posted online. Historic property surveys and information is to be added to the website, and will link to the interactive GIS mapping system. Additional information and links to resources to better understand the guidelines for treatment of historic properties and the flexibility that may be available in design review.

WELCOME

Historic Preservation Process & Code Improvements Open House

With the goal of increasing the Historic Preservation Program's transparency, predictability and effectiveness, the City of Fort Collins has undertaken a two-part study to identify improvements.

Please browse the information and posters available to learn about the study process and the proposed code revisions being brought forward.



What's next?

Look for additional information and outreach opportunities related to the proposed Historic Preservation process and code changes at the following events:

- **Landmark Preservation Commission**
March 12, 2014
- **Planning & Zoning Board**
March 13, 2014
- **City Council**
1st Reading - April 1, 2014
2nd Reading - April 15, 2014