



MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 19, 2023

TO: Chair Meuser and Members of the Cultural Heritage Board

FROM: Susie Murray, Senior Planner and Staff Liaison

CC: Jessica Jones, Deputy Director
Amy Nicholson, Supervising Planner
Cassidy Anderson, Senior Code Enforcement Officer

SUBJECT: **Work being done without benefit of permits within designated preservation districts.**

During the Cultural Heritage Board (CHB) meeting held on June 1, 2022, Board Member Fennell motioned, and Board Member Boren seconded, that an item be added to a future agenda for the CHB to discuss work being done without benefit of permits within designated preservation districts. This was the first step in a three-step process for the CHB to have the discussion.

During its meeting held on December 7, 2022, the CHB voted unanimously to add the discussion onto a future agenda. This was the second step of the process.

During its meeting of June 21, 2023, the CHB discussed the matter with emphasis on educating owners and occupants of homes within preservation districts, as well as eliminating obstacles for smaller projects. After requesting that staff provide additional information for board member consideration, the CHB voted to continue the item for further discussion to its meeting of July 19, 2023. The following links were provided to the CHB on June 23, 2023:

- [Zoning Code Section 20-28.040, Historic \(-H\) Combining District](#) This section of the Zoning Code authorizes the Cultural Heritage Board (CHB) to reduce setbacks and increase the allowable height of a structure through the Landmark Alteration Permit (LMA) process for development proposals for properties within a preservation district. Note: A Variance would be required in all other areas of the City.
- [Zoning Code Section 20-58.060, Landmark Alteration Permits](#) This section identifies what types of projects are exempt from a LMA, and what types of changes trigger the need for a minor or major LMA. This section also provides

review criteria (commonly referred to as findings), which I strongly recommend becoming familiar with.

- [Processing Review Procedures for Owner of Historic Properties](#) This is a very helpful resource that was created specifically for Santa Rosa. Projects that require a historic evaluation by a qualified professional should include a summary of how the proposed project is consistent with this document.
- [Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties](#) Here you'll find guidelines for preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction projects. Similar to the Processing Review Procedures document above, projects that require a historic evaluation by a qualified professional should include a summary of how the proposed project is consistent with applicable Secretary of the Interior's Standards.
- [Design Guidelines, Section 2 - Historic Districts within the Downtown Station Area](#) The City's Design Guidelines is another document that was prepared specifically for the City of Santa Rosa. This link includes discussion about properties that are within both a preservation district and within the boundary of the Downtown Station Area.
- [Design Guidelines, Section 4.7 - Historic Districts](#) This section of the Design Guidelines addresses all preservation districts.
- [Santa Rosa General Plan - 2035](#) Do a word search for "Historic Preservation" and you'll find lots of good stuff for consideration. Pay special attention to the Section – Historic Preservation.
- [Downtown Station Area Specific Plan, Land Use Element](#) The Land Use element of the Downtown Station Area Specific Plan (DSASP) is very helpful when you're considering larger downtown developments.
- [Downtown Station Area Specific Plan, Urban Design Element](#) The Urban Design element of the DSASP includes some unique development standards for development proposals within the Downtown Station Area.

The purpose of this item is to allow the continued discussion, including ideas that may ease the permitting process for owners of homes within Santa Rosa's preservation districts and brainstorm opportunities for education and input. Staff recommends that all Board-members refresh/familiarize themselves with the topic by watching videos of previous meetings, which can be viewed [here](#). If you need assistance locating the videos, please don't hesitate to contact me directly.