



Planning and Zoning Board – Staff Report

DATE: December 13, 2023
TO: Planning and Zoning Board
THROUGH: Natalie Lewis, Deputy City Manager
Nana Appiah, PhD, AICP, Development Services Director
Mary Kopaskie-Brown, AICP, OPPI, CIP, Planning Director
FROM: Rachel Nettles, Assistant Planning Director
SUBJECT: Mesa Historic Preservation Design Guidelines

PURPOSE AND RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Division recommends that the Planning and Zoning Board provide a recommendation that the City Council adopt the Mesa Historic Preservation Design Guidelines. On December 5, 2023 the Historic Preservation made a recommendation that City Council adopt the proposed Mesa Historic Preservation Design Guidelines.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

Mesa's current historic preservation design guidelines were created and adopted in 2001. These guidelines, titled *Historic Homes of Mesa: An Architectural and Preservation Guide* (2001 Guidelines) have served as an excellent resource for the City in preserving the historic resources in Mesa. The recommended Mesa Historic Preservation Design Guidelines (2023 Update) build upon the information contained in the 2001 Guidelines, provide updated information reflecting Mesa's current historical context, and present the information in a concise, easy to use format.

Since 2001, Mesa has added six locally designated Historic Districts and eight locally designated Historic Landmarks. An update to the guidelines is needed to address the historical significance of these resources and their characteristics. The 2001 Guidelines contain valuable information; however, the document is 218 pages and there are opportunities to update and streamline the information. The 2023 Update is a user-friendly policy document that provides guidance for the planning, designing, and improving of historic homes and buildings in Mesa.

The 2001 Guidelines also provide guidance on several topics not regulated by the MZO and the Chapters and Sections specifically related to historic preservation. The 2023 Update accompanies and supplements the companion amendments to the MZO that establish a basis for determining the appropriateness of construction projects proposed for locally designated historic properties.

The 2001 Guidelines were published as a hard copy document with a scanned version available on the City website. Technology has changed and the 2023 Update features a modern, digital document where keyword searches, clickable links, and high-quality color photos are included.

SUMMARY OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES:

The Historic Preservation Design Guidelines are organized into six chapters as described below.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 1 provides an introduction for the Historic Preservation Design Guidelines. This chapter includes the purpose of the document, including an explanation of who should use the guidelines, when they should be used, how to use the document, and its relationship to other City Codes and regulations. Chapter 1 also includes a process flow chart to help users understand what approvals they require for various type of work being completed.

Chapter 2: Certificates of Appropriateness

Chapter 2 describes Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) in the City. It details which projects require a COA and which do not; the MZO changes clarify the process for the COA. This chapter seeks to clarify a common point of confusion by explicitly stating that only properties listed on the local Mesa Historic Properties Register require a COA prior to commencing work. Properties listed only on the National Register of Historic Places and not on the Mesa Historic Properties Register do not require a COA prior to commencing work.

Chapter 3: Guidelines for Preservation, Restoration, and Rehabilitation

Chapter 3 outlines the best practices for the preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of historic resources. The guidelines are intended to help property owners, architects, landscape architects, and contractors as they design and plan for preservation, restoration and/or rehabilitation projects.

Topics include treatment of character defining features; materials and finishes; windows; doors and entries; porches, decks, and balconies; historic roofs; exposed foundations; landscaping and fences; and historic signs.

Chapter 4: Guidelines for Additions and New Construction

Chapter 4 outlines best practices for additions and new construction as they relate to historic resources. It is broken down into topic areas and provides guidance on the placement of additions; design of additions; design of new construction; incorporation of new roofs, dormers, doors and windows, porches, accessory buildings and accessory dwelling units, fences and walls, mechanical equipment, and solar panels; and the installation of new signs on historic buildings.

Chapter 5: Historic Building Types & Architectural Styles

Chapter 5 highlights the common residential building types and architectural styles found in Mesa's historic districts and places. For each building type and architectural style, a brief summary is provided along with a listing of the features typically exhibited by each building type or architectural style.

Chapter 6: Historic Districts and Historic Landmarks

Chapter 6 catalogues Mesa's eight locally designated Historic Districts and Mesa's 23 locally designated Historic Landmarks. A brief history of each historic district and landmark is provided, including its historical development, significant properties, period of significance, and summary of the common building types, architectural styles, materials and defining features.

Additionally, Chapter 6 provides a description of Mesa's Heritage Neighborhood Recognition Program and it includes an outline of the eligibility criteria for establishing Historic Districts and Historic Landmarks.

Appendices

The Design Guidelines contain one appendix that supplements the document. Appendix A provides architectural definitions and associated diagrams for terms that may be used throughout the guidelines.

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND FEEDBACK:

The proposed Historic Preservation Design Guidelines were presented to and discussed with the Historic Preservation Board at the Board's August 1, 2023 meeting.

A public meeting was held on August 24, 2023 where staff received feedback from residents. Many of the comments were not related to the Design Guidelines, but those that were are incorporated accordingly.

ATTACHMENTS:

Exhibit 1 – FINAL - Mesa's Historic Preservation Design Guidelines