

Historic Districts Commission Online Survey – 215 Respondents

The online survey allowed staff to receive feedback from the public on how the Historic District program is performing and how it can be improved. The survey was posted online from January 19 to February 10.

1. Historic neighborhoods are important to Charlotte's quality of life.
 - Agree – 98%
 - Disagree – 2%
2. More should be done to preserve Charlotte's history.
 - Agree – 98%
 - Disagree – 2%
3. More neighborhoods should be designated as historic districts.
 - Agree – 79%
 - Disagree – 21%
 - Not sure
4. How satisfied are you with preservation efforts in historic districts?
 - Satisfied – 8%
 - Somewhat satisfied – 40%
 - Not satisfied – 47%
 - Not sure – 5%
5. The Administrative (staff) design review process is clear and consistent.
 - Agree - 5%
 - Somewhat agree – 26%
 - Disagree – 31%
 - Don't know – 38%
6. The full Commission design review process is clear and consistent.
 - Agree - 1%
 - Somewhat agree -23%
 - Disagree – 34%
 - Don't know – 42%

7. The City Council and Mayor appoint 12 members to the Historic District Commission. This number is:
- Just right – 63%
 - Too large – 19%
 - Too small – 18%
8. The current design guidelines allow a balance between preservation and growth.
- Agree – 4%
 - Somewhat agree -29%
 - Disagree – 45%
 - Not sure – 22%
9. What are your top three issues to address in historic districts?
- New construction (122)
 - Demolition (118)
 - Building footprint size (71)
 - Building height (66)
 - Tree canopy (56)
 - Large additions (53)
 - Materials (37)
 - Open space (37)
 - Windows (15)
 - Fences (9)
 - Painting brick houses (6)
 - Not sure (4)
 - Other.....See pages 3-4

Other Comments

1. I would like to get an estimate for how much time it takes to submit X type of application. 2) Also, about material, I believe in historic character and integrity of materials. 100 yr old wood has a much higher integrity than the wood being produced today. Does today's wood siding have integrity? Will it last for another 100 years? I support using modern materials where it makes sense and compliments/blends with the historic character of the building.
2. A major concern is the razing small bungalows to put up huge houses, totally destroying the personality of neighborhoods. You want a big house, you move to the suburbs.
3. Appropriate lighting
4. Cell & utility pole across from 2-story homes, street signs/posts appropriateness, repave streets, street sweeping where cars are always parked and never gets cleaned, street light locations, building height scale,
5. Commercial Development abutting residences and not meeting guidelines.
6. Continuity with surrounding structures.
7. Cost associated with issues - too high for some things, and process too strict for simple things. And having consistency which is greatly lacking.
8. Current HDC does not always follow guidelines or hold developers to same standards as homeowners.
9. Demolition, or rather preservation, of only truly historic homes, not homes that are newer.
10. Doors
11. Enforcement of design regulations when homeowners ignore them and proceed with their plans.
12. Enforcement of guidelines. And building character to ensure it meets historic guidelines.
13. Far too many apartments and condos are being packed into Plaza-Midwood/Commonwealth-Morningside!
14. Front facing garage.
15. Generic apartments being preferred to neighborhood amenities (pool etc.) Very frustrating!
16. Height and mass as they relate to the streetscape and neighborhood fabric/character.
17. I see nothing wrong with painting brick houses when it improves appearance or using materials such as hardiplank - retains aesthetic and improves appearance longer.
18. Keeping the feel of the historic aspects of the area, particularly with regards to new technology and the installation of cell towers / poles.
19. Losing all older buildings and houses.
20. Loss of contributing structures due to significant renovations and demolitions.
21. Mixing outdated signage/buildings (not historic and not modern).
22. Moving from Charleston to here was a shock historically.
23. No - zero- monitoring to see when people don't comply or when people just blatantly ignore the requirements. This just penalizes the people who do attempt to comply.
24. No matter how good the guidelines are, the commission must follow them in a consistent manner. Faux chateaus, absurd additions and demolitions are destroying the fabric of our historic neighborhoods.
25. No swim club.
26. Over charging for permits, inconsistency, and lack of people on committee with building knowledge.
27. Properties that are being protected today are of little actual historic value and do more to constrain economic development than they do to preserve "historic" properties.
28. Rebuilds and additions need to be more in keeping with existing structures (style and size).

29. Right of Way
30. Setbacks
31. Some criteria disincentives preserving residential historic properties, making improvements etc... Yet many commercial properties/builders are incentive (charged lower fees than residential residents, allowed to make changes that are not within guidelines). This is preventing residential growth and historic district area residential improvements.
32. Stop tearing things down to over build apartments.
33. Telephone poles/power lines (they detract from appreciating the historical qualities of the historic districts).
34. The constant demolition of historical homes for new custom homes and massive apartment complexes that tower over the historical areas.
35. The destruction of old beautiful architecture in order to build condos, or big offices is incredibly disheartening. Camden Road, the corner of Morehead and Scott, much of residential Dilworth, and the recent demolition of the old church on Hawthorne and Central are a few examples. Too many apartment buildings and condo complexes will eventually create slums all over Charlotte.
36. The guidelines and vision seem ok on paper, but it seems that on a case by case basis not all projects follow the guidelines/they are not enforced. Often, the leverage developers gain via increases in tax revenues seems to trump long-term vision for historic communities. That is a disservice to those communities.
37. The overall historic "look and feel" of any new builds/additions, regardless of building height, footprint size, building materials, or setback.
38. There seems to be no floor in the exterior facades of the Ideal Way area- the homes are very large for the lots, it looks very disjointed and unappealing.
39. Ugly new condos that don't fit in the area.
40. Up keeping of the property.
41. Use of existing structures in new design.
42. Walkability.
43. We are not doing enough to preserve both landmarks and historic (older) buildings in Charlotte. Older neighborhoods are being ravaged by developers with no thought to the neighborhood character.
44. We don't need more condos and apartments.
45. While history is important, these districts are not living museums. Guidelines are one thing but blocking development is different. Need to create balance and growth.