

MEMORANDUM

Date: **12 August 2015**

Subject: **Historic Area Commission Guidelines Update – Action Items**

To: **Linda Ratchford – New Castle City Council President**

Dear Linda:

This memorandum summarizes the HARC recommendations presented in the meeting of 30 June 2015 that may result in changes to the Zoning Ordinance and will require action by City Council.

1. General: Remove references to “colonial period” and focus on the *historic* character of Old New Castle which includes a majority of mid-to late nineteenth century buildings (§230-52.A (3)).
2. Term Limits: Include term limits for HAC members other than the Architect who is a consultant to City Council. Members of HAC would serve for three year terms, with no more than two-consecutive terms.
3. Architect Member: stipulate that the Architect member be an architect registered in the State of Delaware (not an AIA member).
4. Architect Member: decide if the Architect Member should remain a voting member or serve in advisory capacity without voting. The consensus opinion of the HARC was that the Architect should remain a **voting** member of HAC. If the Architect member does not have voting privileges, then Council will have to determine how to designate one additional member to provide a tie-breaking vote.
5. Pre-Application Consultations: Include in the process Pre-Application Consultations, which may result in a *Recommendation for Conceptual Approval*
6. Purview: The existing ordinance extends the purview of HAC to all work performed in the Historic Residential (HR) District, or Historic Commercial (HC) District (§239-2(5), §230-45). There is a discrepancy between the limits of the 1984 expanded boundaries of the National Historic Landmark (NHL) District, and the boundaries of the HR and HC Districts. Furthermore, buildings listed on the National Register of historic Places but outside the HR and HC Districts do not come under HAC purview.
The updated Guidelines propose the purview of HAC include the Historic Residence District, the Historic Commerce District, as well as buildings eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. This would allow the inclusion of both the National Historic Landmark District, and individual buildings outside the current limits without extending the limits to the extent recommended in the Comprehensive Plan Update.

7. Applying for Certified Local Government Status

The City of New Castle intends to apply for *Certified Local Government* (CLG) status. This requires developing a local designation process, with local designation criteria, to designate buildings individually or as part of a district.

8. Historic Buildings Inventory:

Conduct an updated inventory of the resources in the HR and HC Districts using the National Historic Landmark District information as a starting point. This will help clarify the classification of each building as key, contributing or non-contributing, and help applicants determine which treatments are appropriate.

9. Implementation of Comprehensive Plan 2009 Update Recommendations

Develop a map identifying one single boundary of the area under the purview of HAC, as well as the buildings in New Castle listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

