



“Rooted” In Tree Conservation and Planting, A Draft Tree Ordinance Is Considered



The loss of existing, mature trees and the need for additional high-quality trees have been long-standing concerns of many in our community. These concerns led to the development of a Tree Ordinance proposal by the Community Appearance Commission in 2004-2005, and to the creation of a Tree Committee, which met with the assistance of a facilitator from 2006-2007. This committee had representation from various community organizations and perspectives. The Tree Committee was assembled to help determine the content of a future Tree Ordinance, and its recommendations were summarized in a report released in December 2007. Planning staff, in conjunction with other depart-

ments, has developed a draft Tree Ordinance that attempts to balance the recommendations of the Tree Committee with the effect on the development community and the needs of local government administration.

The proposed Tree Ordinance expands upon the existing landscaping requirements of the *Unified Development Ordinances* (UDO), including landscaping requirements for areas such as bufferyards, streetyards, parking lots, and floodplains, and the ordinance establishes requirements for minimum Tree Save Areas (TSAs) for residential and nonresidential development, as well as planting and maintenance standards.

Where the minimum amount of required trees does not exist on site, new large-variety trees must be planted to augment the minimum Tree Save Area requirements in accordance with the recommendations of the Tree Committee report. The ordinance also includes provisions to balance site-specific development needs with Tree Save requirements and other UDO requirements. The proposed ordinance strikes a practical balance between saving existing trees and planting new, high-quality trees. New trees must be able to take the place of large older trees as they naturally die out. Over time, new large-variety trees will help distinguish our community with an urban tree canopy.

Rewriting History: Salem and Bethabara Design Review Guidelines to be Revised

Old Salem and Bethabara haven't always looked so old.

The founding areas of what is today Winston-Salem grew and changed as any other town might. But in 1948, the City passed the first historic district zoning ordinance in North Carolina, turning the former town of Salem into the Old Salem we know today. Bethabara became a locally zoned historic district in 1966.

Starting this fall, Historic Resources Commission (HRC) staff will update the design review guidelines that keep these distinctive communities rooted in the past. An advisory committee made up of citizens representing Salem and Bethabara will help Planning staff examine and update the guidelines for these districts over the next several months, clarifying them for those planning to make changes to property there.

To make certain these areas preserve their historic integrity, all property



Before Salem became a historic district in 1948, the 1771 Miksch House at 532 South Main Street, was being used as a drug store and looked a little worn around the edges. It was the first house in Salem to be occupied by a single family and is now owned by Old Salem Museums and Gardens. Photos courtesy of Old Salem Museums and Gardens.

owners proposing to make modifications to a building, structure or site within these two historic districts must first obtain the approval of the HRC. Each district's guidelines help the HRC evaluate changes and ensure that physical alterations do not compromise the special character of an individual property or the district as a whole. The revised guidelines will more thoroughly discuss the requirements and add illustrations and helpful tips for getting projects approved by the HRC.



Design and Development Team Makes Staffing Adjustments

The Design and Development Review team (DDR) is making some staffing adjustments as a result of our vacant Project Planner position being frozen. The position became vacant when Aaron King was promoted to Principal Planner. In addition to the freeze, Assistant Planner Myra Stafford has accepted a promotion as a Senior Engineering Technician with the Winston-Salem Department of Transportation. DDR is moving forward with filling the Assistant Planner position. As a result of the hiring freeze, staff members from other teams have pitched in by taking on some of the rezoning cases and taking over the part of the Environmental

Review process that had been done by Myra. The freeze on the Project Planner position was due to a lower caseload during the first half of 2008; however, the number of rezoning cases appears to have bottomed out during March, April, and May and have been slightly higher since that time. The number of new single-family subdivisions has not yet rebounded; however, this is likely a reflection of the national mortgage lending crisis and the general economic downturn experienced nationwide. Throughout this, the DDR team has continued to provide the same high level of customer service and responsiveness it is known for.

Want more information?

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