

Historic Preservation

Small Group Meeting Summary

This session was held on October 13, 2010, in the Council Chambers Room. Policies are in **bold font**. Action Items are regular front. Public feedback is inserted directly under the relevant Policy or Action Item, and is in **large font, bold and italic**

Comment on Philosophy: Preservation is “foremost.” Concerned that this overrides “balance and predictability.”

HP is not just about buildings – it’s about Aspen’s brand.

I. Sharing the Aspen Story Policies & Action Items

I.1. Raise public awareness and appreciation for the Aspen story.

Agree - *****

Disagree – x

Civic Tourism needs to happen first (decision making based on Economic bottom line, social balance, and environmental

Facilitate what the story is: neutral facilitator is key

End result should be a shared story that we all own.

Projects/development can greatly impact our story

Policy should begin with “continue”

Frequency and large outreach is important → reach out to schools, freshmen/women, involve Hispanics. New workers are not introduced to Aspen’s history. Construction crews need networking

Aspen should honor the mining history more → a unique aspect of our town compared to new ski towns.

Preserve the Aspen Brand. Buildings are the “hardware” and the Aspen Idea is the “software”

I.1.a Create a publicly-accessible online database to collect and distribute information about our historic buildings. (I – P, Aspen Historical Society)

I.1.b Establish a system for compiling information about significant buildings that are demolished, including photographs and relevant stories about people and events associated with those buildings. (LT – P, Aspen Historical Society)

I.1.c Establish a Landmark Signage Program with standards for interpretive signs. (I – P, HPC)

I.1.d Collaborate with local organizations to plan events and related materials regarding our history and architectural innovation. (LT – P, local agencies)

II. Updating the Historic Preservation Program Policies & Action Items

Need to consider (value/requirements) how to deal with historic sites that aren't privately funded.

Should be totally voluntary.

Should be a balance of voluntary and involuntary for post WWII.

Additions to historic structures is an oxymoron.

Development is not preservation. Aspen has a "development department" – other cities have a "planning department"

II.1. Evaluate the historic significance of Post World War II properties as part of the Historic Preservation Program.

Agree - ***

Evaluate the total concept which includes: open space, spaces between historic buildings, landscapes, views. This is our character and history.

Should be "considered"

Conclude the evaluation of historic significance.

Need to define Post WWII

Statement should be conceptual, not specific to just Post WWII properties.

II.1.a Refine existing, and write new historic "Context Papers," which examine architectural and cultural trends, as well as the people and events that place buildings and landmarks in the context of Aspen's history. (I – P)

II.1.b Determine if Context Papers, Designation Criteria and Integrity Scoring Sheets are fair and effective tools to identify which properties should be designated. Make code changes as appropriate. (LT – P)

II.1.c Create a ranking system to evaluate Post-Victorian properties. (I – P)

II.2. Ensure that new development respects the historic integrity of designated structures and is compatible with the surrounding context in terms of site coverage, mass, scale, height and form.

Agree - ***

What does "respect" mean? Does it mean "mimic?"

Replace respects and compatible with “consider”
Ensure is too strong a word. Use recommend and incentivize
Talks only about new development – what about things like traffic signs, business signs, etc.

II.2.a Review Historic Preservation Design Guidelines and Commercial Design Guidelines to ensure that development is compatible with historic resources. (I – P)

II.2.b Use 3-D modeling to implement the policy. (I – P)

II.3. Ensure that the Historic Preservation Benefits Package encourages owners of landmark property to preserve structures to the highest possible degree of historic integrity while minimizing adverse impacts to the neighborhood.

Agree - **

Ensure sounds like a strong enforcement word.

Add “community” after neighborhood

“Package” should be “packages.”

Add Aspen to the statement (“...highest degree of Aspen’s historic...”)

II.3.a Use 3-D modeling to compare and contrast what has been allowed under the Historic Preservation Design Guidelines and Benefits Package to what would have been allowed under regular zoning requirements. Consider amending the code to address impacts on the neighborhood based on the findings. (I - P)

II.3.b Research benefit packages for preserving properties in other communities, and incorporate best practices into City and County codes. (I - P)

II.3.c Explore the creation of benefits that do not affect development size, such as fee waivers or tax incentives, for historic properties (LT - P)

II.4. Maximize the use of the City’s Historic Transferable Development Right Program (TDR) as a method of preserving the historic integrity of designated structures.

Maximize is too strong a word. Should be “explore”

Change to say, “...TDR and other methods...”

Change “as a method” to “for preserving Aspen’s history”

II.4.a Explore implementing a program similar to the County’s that tracks the availability of TDRs. (LT – P)

II.4.b Explore methods to track the sale price and other financial information of TDR transactions. (LT – P)

II.4.c Explore amending the Code to require Planned Unit Developments (PUD) to purchase TDRs for any square footage above the underlying zone district allotment. (LT – P)

III. Public Sector Policies & Action Items

III.1. The public sector should set an example as a responsible steward of preservation and adaptive re-use of historic buildings.

Agree with Policy **

This should be more firm.

The public should model the HP program.

Need to make sure the public sector is subject to criteria everyone else is.

Public should set the bar

This should include Historic Designations!

The public sector should buy and recycle buildings for affordable housing.

Make this more general – too much about buildings. Should include landscapes as well.

Aspen's character is our image, and we should reinforce/protect it.

Our history defines who we are. It is not just about buildings, but also about open space, views, landscape, etc.

III.1.a Establish a long-term plan for the viability, functionality and energy efficiency of all publicly-owned historic buildings. (I – P)

There is no overall plan for city hall – there should be a short term and long term plan

Need energy awareness during construction

Too much repeating construction – doing it too often

III.1.b Evaluate publicly-owned buildings and sites that are potential historic resources while also exploring appropriate changes in use or additions using new Context Papers, Designation Criteria and Integrity Scoring System. (I - P)

Recognize local history in building rather than basing on a pristine example of a national building style – OK to recognize the value of a building that has been modified to represent local economics and history.

Design an affordable system for adaptable re-use

III.1.c Explore purchasing historic properties that can also meet buy-down program goals for Community Workforce Housing. (I – P, APCHA)

IV. Publicly Accessible Interiors Policies & Action Items

IV.1. Preserve exceptional character-defining historic interiors in publicly accessible buildings.

Disagree – x

Agree - ***

Change to “Work to preserve”.

Don’t modify “within publicly accessible buildings” but we don’t know what will qualify in the future – work with people on what’s possible to preserve.

Concerns about functional issues – “extent feasible”

It’s sad when they go, but we can only create a culture that values preservation.

IV.1.a Inventory historic landmarks that are publicly accessible and identify character-defining interior features. (I - P)

IV.1.b Establish criteria for historic designation of character-defining historic interiors that balance preservation, functionality, and energy efficiency. (I - P)

Priority to energy efficiency.

Remodels to minimize construction waste, maximize flexibility for adaptive re-use

IV.1.c Use the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the preservation of historic interiors as guidelines for amendments to the Land Use Code. (LT - P)

V. Review Process and Enforcement Policies & Action Items

V.1. The Historic Preservation Commission’s review process should be positive, productive and fair, with a high level of integrity, consistency and collaboration.

Agree****

Change “should” to “must” and must be trusted

V.1.a Ensure updates to the Historic Preservation program reflect the policy. (I - P)

V.2. Routinely and fairly enforce property specific approvals.

Agree***

Consider impacts on neighborhood with resulting approvals with regards to incentives (lot split, lot line adjustment)

There are unintended consequences with the incentives (density, setbacks)

Use common sense.

Need records management – proper documentation in one place...create project files with all information

There is a gap between HPC and Council review processes – need to consolidate.

V.2.a Improve the City's and County's enforcement of its rules and regulations related to historic preservation. (I – P)

V.2.b Require on-going communication with staff during any renovation of or addition to historic structures or sites. (I - P)

V.2.c Examine the penalties for owners and historic contractors when they violate approvals to determine if these penalties are effective and fair. Amend the code based on the findings. (LT – P)

VI. Historic Preservation Program Education Policies & Action Items

VI.1. Improve public awareness and understanding of the City and County Historic Preservation Programs.

Agree - *****

Take out “programs” and add “efforts.”

Public perception must be addressed first

Values, and/or awareness first, then Policy

Value = understanding

VI.1.a Implement a comprehensive education program that explains the overall goal of the preservation programs, and rights and obligations of owners, developers, Realtors® and licensed historic contractors. (I – P)

VI.1.b Update standards for public notices to include a non-technical summary about proposed projects and links to on-line development plans, staff reports, 3-D modeling, and meeting schedules. (LT – P)

VI.1.c Use 3-D modeling as an educational tool for the public. (LT – P)

How are we going to use 3-D modeling for education?

Context, mass, scale should be included

VI.1.d Collaborate with local groups, such as the Aspen Historical Society, to plan special events related to Aspen Area history and architectural innovation, etc. (I – P, local agencies)

VII. Energy Efficiency Policies & Action Items

VII.1. All existing and future historic landmark properties should be maintained in a manner that improves energy efficiency while maintaining historic integrity.

Agree - ***

Disagree – x

Include concept of prudence...”reasonably maintained”

Change to “work to ensure that all...”

Trust issues might prevent assistance from being sought

**How to create incentive that apply to additions to historical structure
(free for review/fees/fast track)**

**Master plans should be created for city facilities – be an
example/educate owners**

**Need language dealing with solar panels, greenhouses, ground
source heat pump, micro-wind needs and other food production
sources to be accommodated in HP guidelines.**

VII.1.a Provide owners of historic landmarks with free assistance from the Building Department to facilitate energy-efficiency upgrades. (I – B)

VII.1.b Provide information about energy-efficiency loans and other resources to all property owners that go through the historic preservation review process. (LT – P, B)