

Forest Hills Historic Preservation Survey

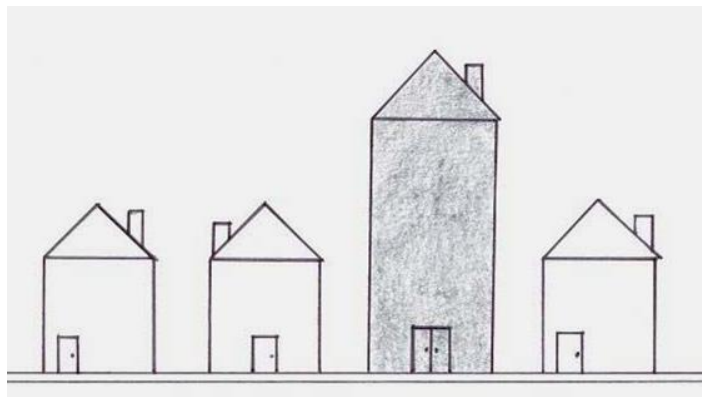
The Forest Hills Neighborhood Association recently concluded a survey on neighborhood attitudes towards historic preservation. The survey was initially launched electronically via e-mail on June 11th. Our intent was to also, at the same time, deliver a duplicate hardcopy version to every residence. The hardcopy, however, was delayed and subsequently hand-delivered to neighborhood residences by neighborhood zone captains on approximately June 18th. For both the electronic and hard-copy versions, the submission close-out date was June 25th. One survey was allowed per property and there were 77 total respondents out of a total of 271 properties (there are several people who own multiple properties in Forest Hills, but none submitted more than one survey.)

Results from this initial launch were presented at the July 21st and 22nd Local Historic District informational meetings at Melrose Park. Due to criticism that the response window for the hardcopy version was too short, and that 77 responses was too few to be representative of neighborhood attitudes, the survey was re-launched on July 30th via postal mailings to all property owners that had not submitted a response. This second opening was closed out on August 11th, netting an additional 61 surveys for a total of 138. Forest Hills property owners have been given three different opportunities to respond and we feel that the ensuing results are the best possible representation of collective neighborhood attitudes towards historic preservation and Local Historic District designation.

The survey was composed of 16 total questions and was accompanied by a cover letter that described its intent and that briefly described the context of Local Historic Designation in the City of Columbia. The cover letter was as follows:

Design Guidelines Survey

Note: Please review basic design guidelines before taking this survey. [Click the image on the right for the Forest Hills Historic Guidelines Overview](#) (PDF)>>



INTRODUCTION:

As discussed at the neighborhood meetings on May 26 and 27, Forest Hills is pursuing a permanent local historic designation through the City of Columbia. A description of this process as well as information about historic preservation in general is available at <http://www.forest-hills.org/history>. An important step for us is drafting Design Guidelines that will spell out measures that will protect the architectural heritage and community character of Forest Hills. These guidelines can be as strict or relaxed as we choose.

The purpose of this survey is to systematically gauge how the more than 280 households in

Forest Hills feel about provisions *typically found in guidelines for those neighborhoods that have preceded Forest Hills in this process*. You can access copies of Design Guidelines for these neighborhoods via the [City of Columbia Preservation and Design Guidelines link](#) on the City's website. **We encourage you to review these guidelines before completing this survey.** There are terms used in the survey that are more clearly defined through images in the guidelines documents. Our goal in pursuing this designation is to protect and preserve the continuity of our neighborhood's character.

Your participation is extremely important. If you have internet access, please complete the survey online by clicking the link below. If not, please [download the hard copy version](#) and mail to **Eric Powers, 2615 Stratford Road, Columbia SC 29204**. Alternatively, you can place it directly in his home's mail slot. You are limited to one survey per household. **Surveys must be completed by Friday June 25th.**

OVERVIEW: The City of Columbia's Design, Development and Review Commission (DDRC) is charged with administering adopted guidelines as they pertain to new construction, additions and renovations. There are several important policies of which to be aware. First, design guidelines will only pertain to architectural characteristics that are visible from the street. Second, existing characteristics of buildings are grand-fathered. When altering those grand-fathered aspects, however, they must be brought into compliance with design guidelines. Finally, the DDRC interprets guidelines. If adopted guidelines are vague, the DDRC must use its best judgment in deciding what is and is not appropriate.

The Columbia DDRC requires that the following actions be subject to design review in local historic districts (1) new construction, (2) additions and enclosures that are visible from the street, (3) actions that alter the exterior appearance of buildings, (4) demolition and relocation of historic structures. For those neighborhoods desiring additional protection, fences and walls, site improvements such as walkways, doors/shutters/awnings and placement of new driveways can also request design review. **Actions that do not require review include** (1) general maintenance and repairs that do not alter the exterior appearance of a building, (2) painting and color, (3) work not visible from the public right of way and (4) interior work. In some cases, authorization for work that clearly conforms to adopted guidelines can be granted by DDRC staff immediately. More extensive projects and projects that do not clearly conform to adopted guidelines will take more time and may need to be addressed at the next monthly DDRC meeting.






On the accompanying sheet are a set of paraphrased provisions commonly seen in guidelines for existing Architectural Conservation Districts in Columbia. Please indicate the degree to which you would support incorporating each provision in the guidelines that will be developed for Forest Hills. Please provide your name and address at the bottom of the survey. This information will be used solely to ensure that we have only one survey per household. If you have additional comments, please write them on a separate sheet and return with your survey

The 16 survey questions reflect provisions commonly found in neighborhood guidelines for the neighborhoods that have preceded Forest Hills in the Local Historic Designation Process. In many cases, the questions are paraphrased and significantly shortened versions of what one actually sees in neighborhood guidelines. Guidelines for neighborhoods such as University Hills are highly restrictive and address all of the issues covered by the 16 questions, and more. Guidelines for neighborhoods such as Earlewood are less restrictive and only address a subset of the 16 questions. It is important to note that it is up to the neighborhood to determine what is the appropriate balance between protecting historical characteristics of the neighborhood and maintaining the rights of homeowners to manage what is usually their most valuable investment. The city's primary responsibility is to facilitate this process.






Survey results are presented on the next page.

Results for: Design Guidelines Survey






- 1) Demolition and relocation of existing historic structures are subject to design review.

| | | Percentage | Responses |
|----------------------------|---|------------|------------|
| Strongly Oppose Including |  | 18.1 | 25 |
| Oppose Including |  | 6.5 | 9 |
| Neutral |  | 8.0 | 11 |
| Support Including |  | 34.8 | 48 |
| Strongly Support Including |  | 32.6 | 45 |
| Total responses: | | | 138 |






- 2) New construction is subject to design review to ensure compatibility with nearby historic buildings in terms of height, size and scale, overall massing of key architectural elements like windows, doors, arches, columns, etc., setback, orientation to the street, and roof shapes.

| | | Percentage | Responses |
|----------------------------|---|------------|------------|
| Strongly Oppose Including |  | 18.8 | 26 |
| Oppose Including |  | 7.2 | 10 |
| Neutral |  | 6.5 | 9 |
| Support Including |  | 31.9 | 44 |
| Strongly Support Including |  | 35.5 | 49 |
| Total responses: | | | 138 |






- 3) Additions and outbuildings (like garages) that are visible from the street are subject to design review to ensure that they serve to reinforce the existing architectural design of the building.

| | | Percentage | Responses |
|----------------------------|---|------------|------------|
| Strongly Oppose Including |  | 24.6 | 34 |
| Oppose Including |  | 9.4 | 13 |
| Neutral |  | 5.8 | 8 |
| Support Including |  | 39.1 | 54 |
| Strongly Support Including |  | 21.0 | 29 |
| Total responses: | | | 138 |






- 4) Actions which alter the exterior appearance of buildings – e.g. removing the half timber highlights that are typical of the Tudor Revival style – are subject to design review.

| | | Percentage | Responses |
|----------------------------|---|-------------------------|------------|
| Strongly Oppose Including |  | 24.6 | 34 |
| Oppose Including |  | 12.3 | 17 |
| Neutral |  | 17.4 | 24 |
| Support Including |  | 30.4 | 42 |
| Strongly Support Including |  | 15.2 | 21 |
| | | Total responses: | 138 |






- 5) Original windows that are visible from the street shall be repaired rather than replaced, unless it is determined that more than 50% of the window or windows in question are irreparably damaged.

| | | Percentage | Responses |
|----------------------------|---|-------------------------|------------|
| Strongly Oppose Including |  | 41.3 | 57 |
| Oppose Including |  | 24.6 | 34 |
| Neutral |  | 17.4 | 24 |
| Support Including |  | 11.6 | 16 |
| Strongly Support Including |  | 5.1 | 7 |
| | | Total responses: | 138 |






- 6) When window replacement is necessary, new windows shall be similar in appearance to remaining historic windows on the house, or in the case of total replacement, to styles that are appropriate to the house's period of significance.

| | | Percentage | Responses |
|----------------------------|---|-------------------------|------------|
| Strongly Oppose Including |  | 26.8 | 37 |
| Oppose Including |  | 9.4 | 13 |
| Neutral |  | 11.6 | 16 |
| Support Including |  | 34.1 | 47 |
| Strongly Support Including |  | 18.1 | 25 |
| | | Total responses: | 138 |






- 7) Vinyl windows are inconsistent with historical design and shall not be used.

| | | Percentage | Responses |
|----------------------------|---|-------------------------|------------|
| Strongly Oppose Including |  | 34.1 | 47 |
| Oppose Including |  | 16.7 | 23 |
| Neutral |  | 18.8 | 26 |
| Support Including |  | 14.5 | 20 |
| Strongly Support Including |  | 15.9 | 22 |
| | | Total responses: | 138 |






- 8) Aluminum-clad windows are inconsistent with historical design and shall not be used.

| | | Percentage | Responses |
|----------------------------|---|------------|------------|
| Strongly Oppose Including |  | 31.2 | 43 |
| Oppose Including |  | 18.8 | 26 |
| Neutral |  | 23.9 | 33 |
| Support Including |  | 15.2 | 21 |
| Strongly Support Including |  | 10.9 | 15 |
| Total responses: | | | 138 |






- 9) Improve the thermal performance of existing windows and doors with weather-stripping and compatible storm windows that do not damage frames rather than with wholesale replacement.

| | | Percentage | Responses |
|----------------------------|---|------------|------------|
| Strongly Oppose Including |  | 31.2 | 43 |
| Oppose Including |  | 26.8 | 37 |
| Neutral |  | 23.2 | 32 |
| Support Including |  | 11.6 | 16 |
| Strongly Support Including |  | 7.2 | 10 |
| Total responses: | | | 138 |






- 10) Aluminum and vinyl artificial siding shall not be used.

| | | Percentage | Responses |
|----------------------------|---|------------|------------|
| Strongly Oppose Including |  | 23.2 | 32 |
| Oppose Including |  | 13.0 | 18 |
| Neutral |  | 15.2 | 21 |
| Support Including |  | 26.8 | 37 |
| Strongly Support Including |  | 21.7 | 30 |
| Total responses: | | | 138 |






- 11) Cement fiber siding, such as Hardiplank®, shall not be used to re-side or repair an existing wood sided structure but may be used for new construction.

| | | Percentage | Responses |
|----------------------------|---|------------|------------|
| Strongly Oppose Including |  | 38.4 | 53 |
| Oppose Including |  | 20.3 | 28 |
| Neutral |  | 19.6 | 27 |
| Support Including |  | 15.2 | 21 |
| Strongly Support Including |  | 6.5 | 9 |
| Total responses: | | | 138 |






- 12) Brick masonry houses shall not be painted, unless they are already painted.

| | | Percentage | Responses |
|----------------------------|---|------------|------------|
| Strongly Oppose Including |  | 47.1 | 65 |
| Oppose Including |  | 27.5 | 38 |
| Neutral |  | 15.9 | 22 |
| Support Including |  | 7.2 | 10 |
| Strongly Support Including |  | 2.2 | 3 |
| Total responses: | | | 138 |






- 13) Chain link, concrete block (unless stuccoed or veneered in brick) and artificial siding materials shall not be used for fences in the front or secondary front yard.

| | | Percentage | Responses |
|----------------------------|---|------------|------------|
| Strongly Oppose Including |  | 10.9 | 15 |
| Oppose Including |  | 3.6 | 5 |
| Neutral |  | 57.2 | 79 |
| Support Including |  | 15.9 | 22 |
| Strongly Support Including |  | 12.3 | 17 |
| Total responses: | | | 138 |






- 14) Acceptable materials for driveways include concrete, brick, brick pavers, or other more permeable materials that maintain visual consistency with historic paving materials.

| | | Percentage | Responses |
|----------------------------|---|------------|------------|
| Strongly Oppose Including |  | 25.4 | 35 |
| Oppose Including |  | 12.3 | 17 |
| Neutral |  | 23.2 | 32 |
| Support Including |  | 29.0 | 40 |
| Strongly Support Including |  | 10.1 | 14 |
| Total responses: | | | 138 |

- 15) Shutters shall not be added unless there is physical or documentary evidence that shutters were present in the past.

| | | Percentage | Responses |
|----------------------------|---|------------|------------|
| Strongly Oppose Including |  | 40.6 | 56 |
| Oppose Including |  | 26.1 | 36 |
| Neutral |  | 23.2 | 32 |
| Support Including |  | 7.2 | 10 |
| Strongly Support Including |  | 2.9 | 4 |
| Total responses: | | | 138 |

16) New shutters must at least appear to be operable and shall be mounted on the inside of the window frame via hinges rather than by being tacked onto the side of the house.

| | | Percentage Responses | |
|----------------------------|---|----------------------|------------|
| Strongly Oppose Including |  | 40.6 | 56 |
| Oppose Including |  | 18.8 | 26 |
| Neutral |  | 16.7 | 23 |
| Support Including |  | 15.9 | 22 |
| Strongly Support Including |  | 8.0 | 11 |
| Total responses: | | | 138 |

17) Required demographic information to ensure one survey per household:

1. Name:

2. Street Address:

Survey results can be broadly classified into four groups (1) areas where there is broad neighborhood support, (2) areas where there is moderate neighborhood support, (3) areas where the neighborhood is approximately neutral, and (4) areas where the neighborhood is opposed to any regulation. In grouping the questions into these four categories, we have included two numbers. The first is the percentage of respondents that indicated support or strong support. The second number is the percentage of respondents that indicated opposition or strong opposition. Neutrals are by definition the left-out category. The breakdown is as follows:

Strong Support for DDRC oversight of:

- Q1: Demolition and relocation (67.4/24.6)
- Q2: New construction for size, scale, rhythm, etc. (67.4/26.0)
- Q3: Additions and outbuildings. (60.1/34.0)

Moderate support for DDRC oversight of:

- Q4: Stylistic changes (45.6/36.9)
- Q6: Window style/appearance (52.2/36.2)
- Q10: Aluminum and vinyl siding (48.5/26.2)

Neutral for DDRC oversight of:

- Q13: Fence materials. (28.2/14.5)
- Q14: Driveway materials (39.1/37.7)

General opposition to DDRC oversight of:

- Q5: Window repair versus replace decisions (16.7/65.9)
- Q7: Utilizing vinyl windows (30.4/50.8)
- Q8: Utilizing aluminum-clad windows (26.1/50.0)
- Q9: Upgrading thermal performance of windows versus replacement (18.8/58.0)
- Q11: Utilizing cement fiber siding (21.7/58.7)
- Q12: Painting of brick masonry houses (9.4/74.6)
- Q15: Shutter additions (9.9/66.7)
- Q16: Shutter operability (23.9/59.4)