



## Historic City of Jefferson

November 2, 2017

City of Jefferson – Planning Division  
Jefferson City Planning and Zoning Commission  
320 East McCarty Street  
Jefferson City, MO 65101

RE: Public Meeting November 9, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

The Historic City of Jefferson introduced a Historic Preservation Ordinance about September, 2014. Through the years, this proposal has been researched and scrutinized by several commissions, committees, and individuals, particularly the Historic Preservation Commission, members of the City of Jefferson staff, and legal counsel. It appears that finally a workable draft has been reached through compromise, collaboration, and persistent hard work.

As President of the Historic City of Jefferson, I represent our membership, which is comprised of about 300 people and at least 6 local businesses. Those members – most citizens within the Jefferson City city limits - joined this organization because they want to see historic buildings in Jefferson City saved from the wrecking ball.

Overall, our organization is pleased with the current ordinance:

- It strengthens and clarifies the Review Criteria for the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to follow.
- It allows for discussion at two meetings of the HPC (if needed) before a decision is made.
- It gives decision power to the HPC to deny a demolition permit for a property deemed historically significant for the community, with an appeals process that goes to elected officials.
- It provides some public notification that a property might be demolished.
- If a demolition permit is granted, it allows additional time for historical research to take place before the structure is actually demolished (which may prevent demolition of that structure).
- The Ordinance covers city-wide properties.

However, we still have some areas of concern.

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**Looking Back...*Moving Forward***

1. Threshold of 100 years for consideration of Historic Preservation Demolition Clearance (denial allowed by the HPC). In the preservation world, the standard property age considered as “historic” is 50 years. This is reflected in the guidelines of the application for designation by the National Register of Historic Places and goes back to the Historic Sites Act of 1935. It is also the current standard for Historic Preservation Commission review in Jefferson City. Other cities and towns typically consider the 50-year threshold, as well, especially if certain historical factors apply.

An additional concern is in how the age of a building is determined. It has been proven that certain sources typically relied upon to determine the age of a building are, at times, incorrect, and to determine the true age of a building, additional research needs to take place. **We suggest a compromise of 75 years** be the designated property age that falls under Historic Preservation Demolition Clearance.

2. Fine amount. The current fine of \$500 is a minimal penalty to most developers for not going through the proper channels for demolition. In the March, 2017 draft of the Ordinance by the Historic Preservation Commission, HPC recommended a much heavier penalty of \$1000 and/or 180 days jail time plus a ban and/or restrictions for the person/entity who unlawfully demolishes (based on the building code in Columbia). **We suggest raising the financial penalty amount to \$950 and retain possible jail time** in the current draft to further discourage unlawful demolitions.

Like any ordinance, the proposed draft now being considered is not “perfect” but it is a starting point to give protection for our most historic and oldest buildings. The strides that have already been accepted by the City Council, including the Capitol Avenue Rezoning and Overlay District, the East Capitol Avenue Urban Renewal Plan, the Neighborhood Plan for the historic Southside/Old Munichburg district, and incentive programs for those purchasing or renovating older properties, are all moving in the right direction to protect our culture and heritage. Acceptance of a Historic Preservation Ordinance will strengthen that commitment.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tammy Boeschen  
President  
573-893-4121

HCJ Mission Statement: *“To proactively preserve our historic resources and create an environment that makes preservation a central focus for future development in the City of Jefferson”*