

Introduction

The City of Whiting by ordinance of the Common Council has established a Historical Preservation District within the City of Whiting. The purpose of establishing Historic Preservation Districts is to safeguard the heritage of the City by preserving areas which reflect elements of its cultural, social, spiritual, economic, political, engineering and architectural history. It is an attempt to help stabilize and improve property values, foster civic beauty and community pride, and to strengthen the local economy. In addition, historic districts can be promoted for the education, pleasure and welfare of the citizens of the City of Whiting, the State of Indiana, and the United States.

A historic district is a district designated by the Common Council for the purpose of the historic preservation. A Historic Preservation District shall include an area or group of areas, sites, buildings, structures of particular historic or architectural significance. Such areas may be publicly or privately owned. This district shall have guidelines applied to it at the time of designation for the purpose of maintaining a particular level of preservation.

The Historic Preservation Commission, appointed by the Mayor, will use Preservation Guidelines as a guide in reviewing changes to properties located within the City of Whiting Historic Preservation District.

Working with the Historic Preservation Commission

These preservation guidelines are intended to help establish a standard of appropriate physical design. The guidelines are written for property owners, building tenants, architects, designers, developers, city staff, and members of city boards and commissions who influence physical change in the Historic Preservation District. It is meant as a guide so that future changes will protect, enhance, and be compatible with the historic character of the City of Whiting Historic Preservation District.

The City of Whiting Historic Preservation Commission realizes that these guidelines cannot cover every situation but will make every effort to work with the property owner, in achieving the desired goals while also preserving the historic integrity of the historic district.

As the property owner within the historic district you must apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) and the City of Whiting Historic Preservation Commission must approve and issue the COA before the Building Department issues a building permit, or any work begins on any of the following changes to the property:

- Demolition
- Additions

- New construction
- Color change
- Alteration or reconstruction
- Any conspicuous change in the exterior appearance of the existing building, including windows, doors, roof, entrances, all exterior features, signage, and walls.

When considering a rehabilitation project, or any work to your property, consult the Historic Preservation Commission or the Building Commissioner's Office first for free advice on proper methods and materials, answers to your "how to" questions and ways to save you money.

City of Whiting Historic Preservation District

The City of Whiting Historic Preservation District encompasses the central business district and also mirrors the Downtown and Boulevard Economic Revitalization Area boundaries. Surveys performed in conjunction with the DNR back in 1985 and 1996 were the basis for this determination. The buildings of this district best represent the character of the city as portrayed by earlier photographs of the district. The Hoosier Theater, built in 1924, is one of the gems within the district being listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Features of the district buildings include decorative cornices and decorative brick work. Although there have been several changes to the buildings over the years, many retain their original features and details.

City of Whiting Historic Preservation District Boundaries

On 119th Street the district is bounded on the west by Atchison Ave. and on the east by Ohio Ave. and the Schrage Ave. alleyway. The north and south boundaries are the alleys north and south of 119th Street itself. Along Indianapolis Blvd. the district is bounded on the northwest by Atchison Ave. and on the southeast by Community Court on the east side of Indianapolis Blvd. and 120th Street on the west side of Indianapolis Blvd.

The property inventory is classified in the following manner:

- Outstanding: the "O" classification means that the property has sufficient historic or architectural significance that it is listed, or is eligible for individual listing, in the National Register of Historic Places. Outstanding resources can be of local, state, or national importance.
- Notable: a classification of "N" means that the property does not merit the outstanding rating, but is still above average in its importance.

- Contributing: a “C” classification means the property is at least 40 years old, but does not meet the criteria for an “O” or “N” classification. Such resources are important to the density or continuity of the area’s historic fabric.
- Non-Contributing: property classified as “NC” is not included in the inventory. Such properties may be older structures that have been altered in such a way to lose their historic character. Those properties not listed below but within the Whiting Historic District are to be assumed non-contributing.

In addition, to the bounded area the Whiting High School smokestack has been added to the property inventory.



City of Whiting Historic Preservation District Guidelines

Environment: Preserve and maintain original features such as parks, gardens, streetlights, fences, signs, benches, walkways, streets, and alleys. Building setbacks shall be retained. All new renovations to the district shall be compatible with the character of the district.

Commercial Buildings: Buildings are typically built to the front edge or “streetwall” of the property. This continuous zero setback should be maintained, especially at the ground floor. The height of additions or new buildings should relate and respect the height of neighboring properties. Existing or original facades should be preserved, if possible, or replicated to maintain the character of the building.

Storefronts: Storefronts are often changed many times throughout a building’s history. Where possible, storefronts shall maintain their original opening. New designs should emulate traditional elements of a storefront and be based on historical benchmarking and documentation. Multiple storefronts within the same building should attempt to be compatible in scale, alignment, color, and materials.

Wood Siding Elements: Prevent deterioration of wood materials by repairing, cleaning, painting, and routine maintenance as needed. If original architecture details and trim features are deteriorated beyond repair, they should be replaced with components of the same materials and design. When deterioration is too severe or extensive, replace all deteriorated wood with new wood of the same size, profile, and character of the historic wood or by piecing-in with wood or consolidating with approved epoxy products.

Vinyl and Aluminum Siding: Use vinyl and aluminum siding only when the original siding is so deteriorated or damaged that it cannot be repaired. If artificial siding must be used, it shall be the same size, profile and style as the original wood. Covering brick or masonry with artificial siding is never recommended.

Masonry: Retain original exterior building materials whenever possible. Cleaning tests should be performed to identify the least harmful cleaning process, starting with the mildest method first.

The pattern of the masonry joints in a building is usually important to the architectural character. Alterations in width, color, and texture of mortar joints can radically change the appearance of a historic building. New mortar should match the original in strength, color, texture, and detailing.

Painting and Paint Colors: Although paint colors are temporary, generally reversible and have usually changed many times throughout the history of the building, they are important in defining certain architectural styles and their elements. Repaint with colors commonly in use at the time the building was constructed. Generally the less number of colors, the more effective the results. Avoid harsh, highly, multi-colored schemes on buildings that originally were painted with restraint and simplicity. Avoid painting brick or stone masonry unless it has already been painted. Refer to approved color palette.

Roofs and Roofing: New roofing material should match as closely as possible to the scale, texture and color of the original roofing material. Avoid changing the essential character of the roof as viewed from the public right-of-way by adding architecture features, large, unsightly fixtures, or using roofing materials inappropriate to the style of building.

Windows and Doors: Windows and doors are important and should be retained if they are original; reflect the original design intent for the building; reflect period styles or building practices; reflect changes to the building from major events; and are of exceptional craftsmanship or design. If wood elements are deteriorated beyond repair, consider replacement by patching or piecing-in with wood or consolidating with approved epoxy products. Most wood windows can be repaired and fitted with energy-saving storm windows at a lesser cost than removing existing windows and buying and installing new. New openings should be compatible in size, shape, scale, to the wall and overall building.

Signage: The purpose for sign guidelines is to encourage, protect and preserve the historic, architectural and cultural amenities that prevail in the Historic District. The guidelines listed below are structured to address the majority of needs. It is imperative that each case is reviewed on its merit through the Certificate of Appropriateness process.

- The design of signs within the Historic District must be approached with care. A sign must be designed for careful integration with the architectural features and its proportions must relate to the fenestration and detailing of the building.
- All illumination shall be shielded and directed solely at the sign and be steady, stationary and of reasonable intensity.
- Back-lighting of signs will not be permitted for new signs. No neon signs are allowed on the exterior of building.
- Wall signs for first floor establishment shall have an aggregate square footage not exceeding (2.5) square feet for each linear of building face.
- The bottom of any projecting sign must be at least (9) feet above the sidewalk. The sign may project no more than (5) feet from the face of the building. Tops of projecting signs may not protrude above the tops of second story window sills if there are windows.
- Ornamental sign brackets should be used to hang projecting signs
- All projecting signs must be hung perpendicular to the building front.
- Total area of projecting signs shall not exceed (15) square feet.
- Supporting frames of projecting signs shall be constructed in a decorative nature with a historic flavor.
- New signs should be made out of wood, imitation wood and shall be at least ½” thick. It is encouraged that there be dimension to the sign by use of raised lettering or framing. The use of metal signs is discouraged.

When in Doubt

Before any work is contemplated within the Historic Preservation District, it is required that the work be reviewed during the permitting process and if necessary brought before the Historic Preservation Commission.

Alcohol Licenses Enabled by District Status

If an establishment intends to purchase a liquor license from the Redevelopment Commission of the City to sell or dispense alcohol solely due to the Indiana Statutes related to the creation of a Historic Preservation District, the Preservation Commission shall hold a public hearing prior to the license purchase to allow property owners within the Historic Preservation District a chance to remonstrate.