

Development Activities Meeting Report (Version: 06/24/2020)

This report created by the Neighborhood Planner and included with staff reports to City Boards and/or Commissions.

Logistics	Stakeholders
Project Name/Address: Schenley Farms Historic District – Design Guidelines	Groups Represented (e.g., specific organizations, residents, employees, etc. where this is evident): Oakland Planning & Development Corporation (OPDC) Schenley Farms Civic Association (SFCA) Area residents City Planning Staff
Parcel Number(s): N/A	
ZDR Application Number: N/A	
Meeting Location: Zoom (Virtual)	
Date: June 9, 2025	
Meeting Start Time: 5:30 PM	
Presenter: Department of City Planning (DCP) & consultant team	Approx. Number of Attendees: 14
Boards and/or Commissions Request(s): Historic Review Commission (HRC)	

How did the meeting inform the community about the development project?

Ex: Community engagement to-date, location and history of the site, demolition needs, building footprint and overall square footage, uses and activities (particularly on the ground floor), transportation needs and parking proposed, building materials, design, and other aesthetic elements of the project, community uses, amenities and programs.

Department of City Planning (DCP) began by introducing the consultant team supporting the project, including Landmarks SGA, Lineage Historic Preservation Services, and MonWin Consulting. The presenter cited the historical significance of the Schenley Farms Historic District, which was developed as part of the city beautiful movement, with buildings designed by prominent architects. An overview of the project was shared: to establish design guidelines for the historic district, to support property owner/applicants, DCP staff, and the HRC with easy-to-follow and consistent guidance for historic reviews, so all parties have same slate of information. The guidelines are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, but are specific and tailored to the district. A map of the Schenley Farms Historic District was presented as context. Historic review is applicable to all exterior modifications that are visible from a public right of way (a list of common elements was shared).

As part of the process, two documents were created, one general city-wide guidelines and a second district-specific document for Schenley Farms. The engagement process was outlined, including two public meetings in the district, in which public input and feedback was gathered. The presenter shared a list of items gathered from the April public meeting, and including responses as to how each item was addressed. These items included topics regarding clarifying hierarchy of facades along Fairfield lane, specificity about preferred materials, mentioning mid-century architecture style, clarifying terms, and addressing concerns about demolition due to disrepair and neglect.

Input and Responses

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
<p>What changes can be expected as a result of this project? You mentioned efforts to streamline the review process, when can we expect to see these changes be implemented?</p>	<p>The historic review process will remain unchanged. This design guideline document may be utilize to help take you through the process. Previously, there was no reference to consult to understand which replacement materials may be acceptable. This document provides a baseline of what the HRC is reviewing and know what their expectation are. The secretary of interior standards is a challenging document that is hard to decipher, while these guidelines are tailored to the district.</p> <p>DCP staff: This project is the first step in longer term goal to streamline review process. Having a clear graphic document that all parties are on same page (i.e. staff, HRC, and applicants) is very beneficial. The longer term goal (a multi-year process) is to clarify how projects are to be reviewed. Delineating between a basic application (e.g. window, door) which may be an administrative staff-level review, versus a more thorough commission-level review (e.g. new construction, additions).</p>
<p>Is there any thought into changing the threshold historic projects that require a DAM?</p>	<p>Yes, this point is well taken and a common request to help limit the number of DAMs for smaller-scale projects, such as window replacements. Once the new system of admin-level reviews is established, basic applications can be handled at the staff level and will not need HRC review and therefore will not need a DAM. This change will not require a legislative change to the RCO code.</p>
<p>SFCA Board Member: I think it is a well done project so far. I think it does accomplish the goals of providing simplification and having one source to gain insight into the process.</p>	
<p>Regarding the formatting of the call-out boxes (e.g. alternate materials), will they be integrated into the section numbering?</p>	<p>No, the call-out boxes and guidelines are separate, meaning the call-out boxes are not guidelines.</p>
<p>If a replacement is not “like for like,” but an acceptable alternate materials, does the project have to go through historic review?</p>	<p>A change in materials or configuration must go to the HRC, but a like for like replacement may be a staff-level review.</p>
<p>Are the alternate materials likely to be approved by the HRC?</p>	<p>In the future, such replacements of windows and roofs may be staff-level review and not go to the HRC.</p>
<p>SFCA Board Member: Our neighbors have mentioned the concern of certain replacement materials being cost prohibitive. I do not see affordability or cost mentioned, which was one of our goals. Maybe it should or should not mention these terms.</p>	<p>We do not have specific references to cost, but we recognize the importance of affordability. The goal is to match the original material, and the material options listed are made up of a variety of costs. We have added references to alternate materials that are likely less expensive than the original materials (e.g. a slate roof).</p>

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
Is it possible to provide a list of additional alternate materials, to add more possible substitutes/options?	
Specifically for roof materials, are there additional examples of alternate materials?	We are not aware of additional examples. The document must have longevity for 10 years, and new technology may come out, which is why we keep the language somewhat generalized, so the guidelines are not out of date.
SFCA Board Member: Thank you for this work and efforts to address community input, especially the addition of the call-out boxes, which are helpful.	
Regarding roof materials, there are convincing metal materials that looks like slate. I know of an example in the district that was approved as is metal material.	
For each submittal, is there a verification for accuracy of the original materials and configurations?	We ask applicant for additional photos showing relevant details. We also use Google Maps, and can working with the building inspector if necessary.
For this process to be effective, enforcement is essential to make sure original materials are accurately presented and reviewed.	

Planner completing report: Christian Umbach, Senior Planner