

MEMORANDUM
April 6, 2016

TO: Landmarks Board

FROM: Lesli Ellis, Comprehensive Planning Manager
Debra Kalish, Senior Assistant City Attorney
James Hewat, Senior Historic Preservation Planner
Marcy Cameron, Historic Preservation Planner

SUBJECT: Public hearing and adoption of revisions to Section 1, The Historic District of the *Downtown Urban Design Guidelines* pursuant to the rulemaking procedures set forth in Chapter 1-4, B.R.C. 1981.

SUGGESTED MOTION

If the board accepts the proposed revisions, staff recommends the following motion language:

I move that, pursuant to the rulemaking procedures set forth in Chapter 1-4, B.R.C. 1981, the Landmarks Board approve as to substance the proposed revision to Section 1, "The Historic District," of the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines, specifically Subsection 1.1, G., to include an additional guideline, "Surface parking lots are discouraged," so that subsection will now read as follows:

- G. Reduce the visual impact of structured and surface parking.
 - 1. Surface parking lots are discouraged.
 - 2. Parking structures should be compatible with the historic district, overall block and adjacent buildings. All parking structures should be architecturally screened and/or wrapped with an occupiable use.
 - 3. Surface parking should be located to the rear of the property and screened from view.
 - 4. Pedestrian routes in structures and parking lots should be easily identifiable and accessed, with clear visual connections to the sidewalks and buildings.

PURPOSE

The Landmarks Board approved revisions to Section 1, "The Historic District," of the

Downtown Urban Design Guidelines at their February 3 and March 2 meetings. The Feb. 3, 2016, version of the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines is available online at <https://documents.bouldercolorado.gov/weblink8/0/doc/131284/Electronic.aspx>. The revisions made at the March 2 meeting can be referenced in the March 2, 2016 Landmarks Board memo, available online at <https://documents.bouldercolorado.gov/weblink8/0/doc/131871/Electronic.aspx>.

If the board approves these revisions as to substance, three copies of the proposed revisions will be filed with the city clerk and the public will be given notice that Section 1 is available for review and comment during a 15-day comment period pursuant to Chapter 1-4, *Rulemaking*, of the Boulder Revised Code 1981.

SUMMARY

- As part of the Design Excellence Initiative, and in response to City Council direction in March of 2015, staff has been working on revisions to the *Downtown Urban Design Guidelines* to improve usability, organization and graphics, remove redundant and outdated items, and bring the 13-year-old document into alignment with the plans, policies and regulations created since the last update.
- The update to the Guidelines was prepared during seven working group sessions facilitated by staff from August through November of 2015. In addition, staff held a joint board meeting and a public open house in December of 2015 to present the draft edits and recommendations from the working group. Reference the February 3, 2016 and March 2, 2016 Landmarks Board memos for background information on the process and proposed revisions.
- The Landmarks Board made revisions to Section 1, *The Historic District* on February 3, 2016 and March 2, 2016. The Planning Board and the Design Advisory Board made recommendations to City Council on changes in Sections 2 and 3.
- City Council reviewed the recommended revisions on Feb. 16, 2016, and requested that the following language be added to guideline 1.1 (G)(1) in Section 1: "Surface parking lots are discouraged."
- The City Attorney's Office has reviewed and approved the proposed revisions as to form.
- Three copies of the proposed revision will be filed with the City's Central Records Department on April 6, 2016, and will be published in the Boulder Daily Camera April 7, 2016, to allow for a 15-day public comment period per *Rulemaking*, Chapter 1-4, of the Boulder Revised Code 1981.

NEXT STEPS

April 7 – April 22, 2016 Public Comment Period; Notice of Rulemaking published in the newspaper on April 7, 2016. If no comments are received, the guidelines will become effective immediately after the public comment period. If comments are received, staff will forward them to the Board for consideration at its May 4, 2016 meeting.

May 4, 2016 If, after reviewing public comments, the Board makes substantive changes to the proposed revisions to the Guidelines and they are approved as to form by the City Attorney's Office, staff will publish those changes and a third public comment period will begin. This process continues until there are no further substantive changes to the rule.

ATTACHMENTS

- A: Proposed change to Section 1, "The Historic District," page 15.
- B: Notice of Rulemaking for Amendments to the *Downtown Urban Design Guidelines* per Chapter 1-4 of the Boulder Revised Municipal Code, 1981

Note:

For detailed information on historic buildings and preservation information on individual building elements see the [National Park Service \(NPS\) Technical Briefs](#).

Code:

See the Boulder Revised Code (B.R.C) [Section 9-9-16, "Outdoor Lighting"](#) for lighting requirements.

Code:

See the B.R.C. [Section 9-9-14, "Parking Lot Landscaping Standards"](#) for parking lot screening requirements.

Insert text as 1.1, G., 1: "Surface parking lots are discouraged" and renumber 1, 2 and 3 as 2, 3 and 4.

- eight foot clearance from the sidewalk. Awnings should not obscure or damage important architectural details.
2. Operable fabric awnings are encouraged. Metal awnings or canopies that are similar in form to fabric awnings may be appropriate when designed as an integral part of the building facade, and do not appear as tacked-on additions. Awning color should be coordinated with the color scheme of the entire building front. Mechanized awnings and awnings on the upper stories are discouraged.
- C. Select building colors appropriate to the area's historic character.
1. Select a color scheme that will visually link the building to its past as well as to others in the area. Consider colors that are compatible with the building's predominant materials, or do an analysis of colors pre-existing on the building and use one of the colors found.
 2. Develop a comprehensive color scheme. Consider the building as a whole as well as the details that need emphasis. Softer muted colors establish a uniform background. Establish a hierarchy for the color palette with one color on similar elements such as window frames. Reserve brighter colors for small special accents to emphasize entry ways and to highlight special structural ornamentation.
 3. It is not appropriate to paint unpainted brick. If the brick is already painted, paint removal is preferred. Avoid paint removal procedures that damage the original brick finish such as sand blasting or caustic chemicals. Before removing paint conduct a test to determine detrimental effects. If the existing paint on the brick is in poor condition and paint removal will damage the underlying brick, the brick should be repainted.
- D. Minimize the visibility of mechanical, structural, or electrical appurtenances.
1. Use low-profile mechanical units and elevator shafts that are not visible from the street. If this is not possible, set back or screen rooftop equipment from view. Be sensitive to views from the upper floors of neighboring buildings. Skylights or solar panels should have low profiles and not be visible from the public right-of-way. These features should be installed in a manner which minimizes damage to historic materials.
- E. Improve rear or side alley elevations to enhance public access from parking lots and alleys.
1. Where buildings are built to the alley edge, consider opportunities for alley display windows and secondary customer or employee entries.
 2. Screening for service equipment, trash, or any other rear-of-building elements should be designed as an integral part of the overall design. Where intact, historic alley facades should be preserved along with original features and materials. Alterations should be compatible with the historic scale and character of the building and block.
- F. Exterior building lighting should be designed to enhance the overall architecture of the building. Security lighting should be designed for safety, as well as night-time appearance.
- G. Reduce the visual impact of structured and surface parking.
1. Parking structures should be compatible with the historic district, overall block and adjacent buildings. All parking structures should be architecturally screened and/or wrapped with an occupiable use.
 2. Surface Parking should be located to the rear of the property and screened from view.
 3. Pedestrian routes in structures and parking lots should be easily identifiable and accessed, with clear visual connections to the sidewalks and buildings.
- H. The law requires that universal access be located with the principal public entrance.
1. In existing buildings, where the only route is not accessible from the principal public entrance, a rear or side service entrance route may be considered.
 2. Ramps and related accessibility modifications to a historic property should be compatible with the character of the building.

Attachment B: Notice of Rulemaking for Amendments to the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines per Chapter 1-4 of the Boulder Revised Municipal Code, 1981

Notice of Rule-Making

The Landmarks Board of the City of Boulder proposes to adopt the following rule by the rulemaking procedures set forth in Chapter 1-4 of the Boulder Revised Municipal Code, 1981.

The Secretary of the Board filed three copies of the proposed rule with the City Clerk, located in the Municipal Building, 1777 Broadway, Boulder, Colorado, on April 6, 2016. Those copies are available for public review and comment until April 22, 2016. Written comments should be submitted to James Hewat at hewatj@bouldercolorado.gov, or the above address, by April 22, 2016.

The proposed rule was approved as to substance prior to publication by the Landmarks Board at its April 6, 2016 meeting.

The proposed rule was approved as to form by the City Attorney's Office on March 25, 2016.

Notice of intent to adopt the rule was published in the Daily Camera on April 7, 2016.

REGULATION/RULE

Revisions to Section 1 "The Historic District" of the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines to add the following language to guideline 1.1(G)(1): "Surface parking lots are discouraged."

This regulation is established to provide guidance for the review of Landmark Alteration Certificates in the Downtown Historic District to ensure that proposed alterations of designated properties will not adversely affect or destroy their historic character or architectural integrity and that all changes are consistent with the spirit and purpose of Chapter 9-11, Historic Preservation, of the Boulder Revised Code 1981.

The Landmarks Board of the City of Boulder proposes to adopt a regulation to amend Section 1 "The Historic District," of the *Downtown Urban Design Guidelines*. As proposed, the amended design guidelines will continue to provide guidance in preserving and protecting the historic character of the district. A full and complete copy of the revised guidelines are available for public review at Central Records at the Municipal Building, 1777 Broadway Street 2nd floor, Boulder Colorado, 80302 or online at www.boulderhistoricpreservation.net.