Summary of Feedback: January – August 2013

1- Summary of Customer Survey Results
2- Summary of Jan. 16 Public Meeting
3- Landmarks Board Minutes from Jan. 16 meeting
4- Responses to Online Questionnaire Following Jan. 16 Public Meeting
5- Summary of Feb. 12 City Council and Landmarks Board Joint Study Session
6- Summary of Feb. 19 Stakeholder Meeting
7- Draft Summary of Apr. 4 Planning Board Discussion
8- Summary of Apr. 23 Stakeholder Group Meeting (Goals and Objectives)
9- Summary of May 1 Public and Landmarks Board Meetings (Goals and Objectives)
10- Draft Summary of Apr. 26 PLAN-Boulder Forum
11- Summary of June 5 Public and Landmarks Board Meetings (Themes and Recommendations)
12 - Summary of Feedback from June 11 Stakeholder Group (Themes and Recommendations)
13- Summary of July 18 Public and Landmarks Board Meetings (Draft Historic Preservation Plan)
14- Letter from Historic Boulder dated July 16, 2013, Feedback on the July 3, 2013 Draft Plan
15- Draft Summary of August 13 City Council Discussion

Customer Survey

A customer survey was mailed to 448 individuals that had applied for a landmark alteration certificate, landmark designation, or demolition review in the last year. Surveys were also sent to applicants who had applied for Historic Preservation Tax Credits in the last five years.

A total of 91 completed surveys were received for a response rate of 21%. The majority of respondents (64%) were property owners, and most had applied through the landmark alteration process or the demolition review process. The survey asked respondents to provide feedback on their experience with the Historic Preservation Program and provide suggestions for changes that might improve the program.

In responding to their experience with the review process:

- A majority found the review process was completed in a timely manner and were generally satisfied with the outcome.
- Concerns were expressed about the clarity and ease in navigating the review processes. In particular, comments indicated that the processes were often hard to understand and that staff and the Landmarks Board should do a better job of providing clear and accessible information.

Respondents indicated that the most effective aspects of the current review processes are:

- That there is a program in place to preserve the city's historic resources;
- The ability to meet with staff and interact with the board;
- That the process is reasonable;
- The weekly Landmarks design review committee (Ldrc) meetings are a helpful part of the process.

Suggestions for changes to improve the review processes centered on the following themes:

- Clarify and streamline the review process.
- Create a more consistent structure for reviews.
- The Ldrc and Landmarks Board should allow greater flexibility for different issues.
- Create a more collaborative review process with more understanding of the owners' point-of-view.
- Provide for adequate training of Landmarks Board members to ensure the highest quality of reviews.

Suggestions for incentives to encourage the preservation of Boulder's historic resources included:

- A grant program should be established to encourage rehabilitation and restoration projects;
- Existing incentives should be advertised more broadly;
- Eligibility requirements for incentives should be expanded;
- Green points should be granted for energy efficient remodels of historic properties.

Suggestions to better provide education and outreach for historic preservation issues included:

- The city should host annual or semi-annual meetings to educate property owners;
- Design guidelines should be sent to new owners in historic districts and of landmarked properties;
- Accessibility and ease-of-use of the Historic Preservation Program website should be improved;
- Realtors should be educated on existing regulations and review processes.

Historic Preservation Plan Public Meeting

Wednesday, January 16, 2013
6:00 – 7:15 p.m.
Municipal Building Lobby, 1777 Broadway

Attendees: 31 members of the public, 4 Landmarks Board members and 8 staff members.

Purpose

The purpose of this meeting was to introduce the project and gather input on the current historic preservation program and to develop the goals and objectives for the plan. The meeting began with a presentation by Historic Preservation Planner James Hewat who explained the purpose of the project and the anticipated timeframe. Consultant Mary Therese Anstey, principal of HistoryMatters, LLC, provided an overview of her work to date, followed by a short question and answer session.

The group then broke into small discussion groups, each facilitated by a staff member and guided by two questions. The first question was focused on the current program and the second was intended to gather input of what the future of the program should be. Landmarks Board members were present to observe, and met immediately after to discuss the same framework questions.

Following the small discussions, the key points were reported to the larger group. The meeting ended around 7:15 p.m. and approximately 10 members of the public stayed for the Landmarks Board discussion.

1) What comments do you have on the Historic Preservation program? What key issues should the plan address?

- Public perception of the Historic Preservation program/Landmarks Board discourages people from designating their homes or undertaking projects that require design review.
- Program as a whole is of value to the community.
- Public outreach and education is lacking – the program should be more proactive.
- Design Review can be frustrating due to inconsistency of decisions and a lack of clarity about what is required.
- Incentives should be advertised.
- A project-by-project approach is not comprehensive- the broader impact should be considered.

2) What should historic preservation in Boulder look like in the future? What should the main goals and objectives of the historic preservation program be?

- Demolition process should be revisited
- Education and outreach should be a top priority.
- The value of historic preservation should be promoted (i.e. sustainability and community character).
- Partner with organizations to promote historic preservation in Boulder.
- Highlight the positive work that is done – saves and successes.
- The program should have a broader focus, rather than a project-by-project review.
- Design review should be less restrictive at the rear of a property; focus on mass and scale.
- Design guidelines should provide more flexibility regarding windows, new materials, and sustainability concerns.
- Conservation Districts should be considered to provide an "in between" designation that would preserve the mass, scale and character of a neighborhood without regulation on details such as windows and materials.

CITY OF BOULDER
LANDMARKS BOARD
January 16, 2013
1777 Broadway, W. 1777 Conference Room
7:30 p.m.

The following are the summary minutes of the January 16, 2013 City of Boulder Landmarks Board meeting. A digital recording and a permanent set of these minutes (maintained for a period of seven years) are retained in Central Records (telephone: 303-441-3043). You may also listen to the recording on-line at: www.boulderplandevelop.net.

BOARD MEMBERS:
Mark Gerwing, Chair
Kurt Nordback
Kirsten Snobeck
John Spitzer

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:
Liz Payton

STAFF MEMBERS:
Debra Kalish, Assistant City Attorney
Lesli Ellis, Comprehensive Planning Manager
James Hewat, Senior Historic Preservation Planner
Marcy Cameron, Historic Preservation Planner
Juliet Bonnell, Administrative Specialist

1. CALL TO ORDER

The roll having been called, Chair **M. Gerwing** declared a quorum at 7:33 p.m. and the following business was conducted.

2. DISCUSSION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN, INCLUDING COMMENTS ON THE CURRENT PROGRAM AND DISCUSSION OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN.

What comments do you have about the Historic Preservation program? What key issues should the plan address?

Survey

- Existing surveys are outdated.
- Modernism survey is inadequate and should be expanded through a resurvey.
- Consider a thematic survey (e.g. Boulder's agricultural past).
- Resurvey older properties, either by choosing the first area surveyed in Boulder and working up to the most recent, or identifying areas that have experienced the most development (e.g. Newlands) for resurvey.
- Consultant Mary Therese Anstey added that resurveying a property every ten years is considered the best practice, but that this is becoming increasingly costly.

- J. Spitzer commented that in comparison to other cities, Boulder has completed an impressive number of surveys and perhaps resources should be focused elsewhere.
- The board requested information on the cost and resources involved in a resurvey project to inform a resurvey plan.

Incentives

- 0% interest loans offered by other cities would help promote the preservation of historic buildings.
- Landmarks Design Review Committee (Ldrc) meetings could be used as an opportunity for education about incentives.
- Historic Preservation awards program should be broadened to include successful smaller projects, such as porches or dormers.
- More exemptions and/or variances with respect to the zoning code should be provided.
- Consider allowing a lot to be subdivided for properties with a small house on a large lot as the demolition of smaller resources is often driven by land values (e.g. agricultural resources).

Certified Local Government

- New board members should be educated about the CLG program.
- Explore CLG resources that the city may not be taking advantage of.

Public Outreach

- There was consensus among the board that public outreach and education is a top priority and the board noted that this aspect of the program dominated the public meeting's small group discussions.
- A Landmarks Board Subcommittee was formed last year, but they are unsure about how to be most effective.
- Consider expansion of the awards program for small projects.
- Tap into outside resources that are better at outreach.
- Dedicate staff time and resources to outreach and education.
- Increase outreach efforts by polling citizens regarding their preferred form of education (brochures, lectures, electronic media, etc.).
- Consider development of a smartphone application based walking tour, such as the one developed by Historic Denver, Inc.
- Explain the design review and demolition processes more clearly.

Landmark and Historic District Designation

- The board acknowledged that a new district has not been formed in a number of years.
- Property owners seem to be concerned about the character of the neighborhood, but not to the point of supporting historic district designation (and district designation has typically been community-driven). Public perception is negative due to a sense of loss of private control of designated properties.
- Support for conservation districts (program with more teeth than the Structures of Merit program, but less heavy-handed than designated districts) with guidelines regarding the form, mass and character of the area.
- Consider a thematic conservation district, such as a non-contiguous district of bungalow-styled houses or houses designed by a single architect, such as Charles Haertling.
- In order to gain support for a thematic conservation district, the board may need to take a different, more proactive approach.

Design Review

- Design review is a strength of the current program.
- New board members should be more thoroughly educated on the process.
- Consider simplifying the design review application.

- Consider allowing projects to be reviewed conceptually, in a more collaborative process, by the Ldrc.
- The issue of projects being prejudged at the Ldrc is legally sensitive and has caused the design review process to become more formal in recent years.
- Outreach efforts could be improved by inviting applicants to submit their project in the conceptual stages, allowing applicants to save money on the creation of plans for a project that may not be feasible.
- Clarify to applicants that lack of Ldrc approval is not a denial. In some cases, applicants who do not receive approval through Ldrc review chose not to continue with the project. It would be beneficial for the planning department to tally cases where this occurs.

Structures of Merit

- The idea of the program is good, but the board is unsure how it should be used, since it is only honorary and does not have any "teeth" to provide historic preservation protection.
- The positive purpose of the program is to honor properties that are not yet 50 years old and resources that have not yet come in for review.
- Consider expanding the program to include recognition of smaller projects, e.g. mail recognition letters and certificates to applicants each year.
- Consider creating a 'District of Merit,' such as Whittier, where homeowner support might be stronger for an honorary district than a historic district.

Demolition Review

- Proposed change to the demolition ordinance is currently being heard by council. The change would exempt portions of a building that are less than 50 years old from review. If the change is adopted by council, it is important to inform the public.
- Reconsider staff-level review for buildings constructed after 1940.
- The board expressed frustration over the "all or nothing" aspect of demolition review. The board may only consider the current condition of a building and not the changes being proposed.
- Consider additional changes to the demolition ordinance that would address the "all or nothing" issue and improve the ordinance.
- The board is interested in how other communities conduct demolition review and if partial demolition is allowed.

What should historic preservation in Boulder look like in the future? What should the main goals and objectives of the historic preservation program be?

- The plan needs to anticipate issues of sustainability, growth, density and the threat of a major flood.
- The public perception of the Landmarks Board needs to be improved (if the public perception is not improved, the program will lose credibility and possibly be a detriment to resources from the 1960's, which have not yet come in for review).
- Outreach and education efforts should be increased
- The board should be a resource in adapting historic homes for the future
- The Ldrc should be opened to more people for customer-friendly conceptual reviews

3. MATTERS FROM THE LANDMARKS BOARD, PLANNING DEPARTMENT AND CITY ATTORNEY

4. DEBRIEF MEETING/CALENDAR CHECK

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Historic Preservation Plan Online Questionnaire #1

The following questionnaire was posted on the Historic Preservation Plan website following the Jan. 16, 2013 public meeting and was available until January 23, 2013. The purpose of the questionnaire was to gather feedback regarding the current program and input on the goals and objectives of the plan.

The online questionnaire received seven responses, which are included below.

What comments, if any, do you have about the following aspects of the current historic preservation program?

1. **Landmark and Historic District Designation**
    - Historic District Designation should only be pursued when a super majority of the affected property owners agree through a one-vote per property.
    - You should be exploring reducing the size of districts, not expanding or adding new ones. You should create explicit buffer zones for larger districts that (after they are made smaller) treat homes on the edges in a much more relaxed way. Most importantly, we do not need some grandiose "fundamentals" document, we need a serious re-examination of how the current process is implemented. It is broken and must be fixed!
    - The ability to do this is a true blessing. It increases property values and makes Boulder an interesting place to live and visit. These aspects should be explained more clearly to homeowners.

2. **Design Review**
    - This process is much too strict and too much at the whim and taste of the Design Review Committee. Many people have had their plans altered to such a point that they didn't even like the finished product themselves, and many people quit in frustration during the process.
    - Should be as limited as possible.
    - The review process is fundamentally unfair to applicants, especially within inconsistent, biased and arbitrary DRC meetings.
    - Mark Gerwing's desire to see the LDRC as a positive, proactive collaborator in early planning is somewhat dependent on having the right Landmarks Board members and staff. There is a tremendous opportunity to make Mark's vision a reality with the two openings coming up on the LB.
    - This can be a helpful process for those that are interested in historic preservation. Unfortunately, it does not seem to help architects or homeowners who are skeptical appreciate the good that they could do by incorporating historic preservation goals into their plans. In particular, it does not seem to impart to architects that they could build more imaginative buildings that fit better into Boulder at no extra cost.

3. **Structures of Merit Program**
    - No structure should be designated as historic unless the property owner is in support of it.

- Not a bad thing, but the truth of the matter is that it only takes one short-term homeowner a year or two to destroy an historic house before moving on to the next flip.

4. Demolition Review

- Lack of functionality of the property improvements should be a major guideline to allow demolition. The age of the structure should not be the determining factor.
- Must be completely revised.

5. Architectural Surveys

- Boulder already has a representative collection of historic buildings covering architectural styles. Architectural surveys have already been done and the city should not spend more money on these types of surveys just because there is a new group of buildings reaching 50 years old.
- Should be limited to truly "old" homes/neighborhoods and to homes that actually have some innate quality. It's a waste of our tax dollars to apply landmark designation to post world war 2 homes, especially those built with poor quality, environmentally unsustainable materials. You really must let go of the flawed idea that these tract homes have any historical value. This is utter folly and we do not understand or agree with your belief that these represent valuable history!
- Definitely a good idea to keep track of what we have.

6. Incentives for Property Owners to Encourage Rehabilitation Projects

- These should be energy efficiency oriented. Rehabilitation to an era should be at the discretion of the property owner.
- A very good thing! One problem is that some incentives are first-come-first-serve, which allows incentives to be gobbled up by a few big projects.

7. Status as a Certified Local Government

- No comment.
- Not sure what this means.

8. Public Outreach and Education

- Encourage awareness of historic periods without placing restrictions on properties.
- In general, you have failed at this. However, I'll grant you that allowing us to comment via this survey and to participate in your current effort at evaluating the program is a positive step.
- Interpretation is helpful - draws people in, builds a sense of connection. Tell the story where people are standing, walking or gathering. Do more all over town! Chautauqua does a good job with signage and self guided phone tour.

9. Sustainability

- Allow the city to evolve by allowing older, inefficient homes to be remodeled to the wishes of the property owner.
- This has far greater value to this community than novel or expanded historic preservation.
- Sustainability by rehabilitation should be an important part of getting green points and the like.

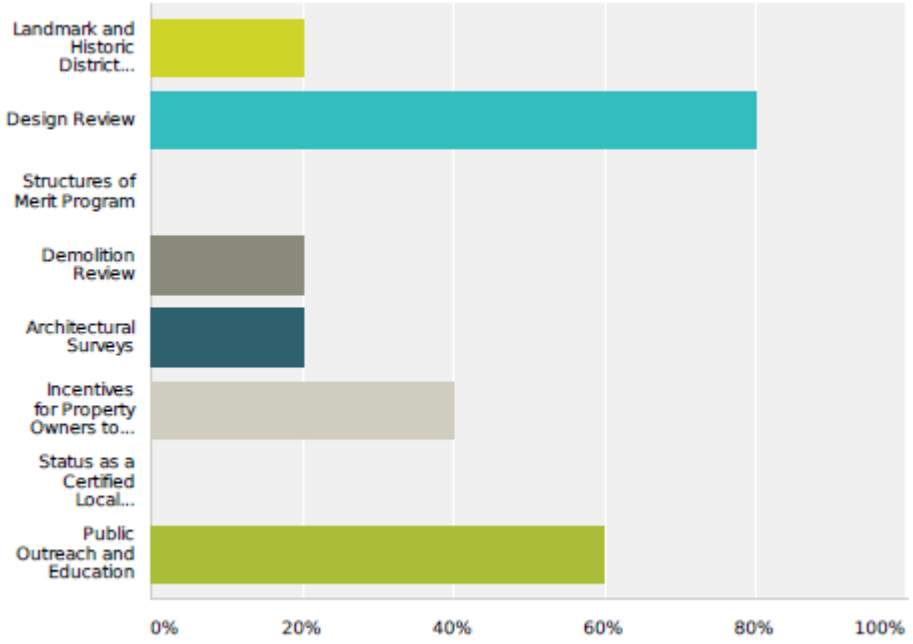
10. Additional Comments

- The historic preservation plan MUST place more priority on environmental concerns and on streamlining the process. This means letting go of some of the historic standards that have been so important. The balance is skewed way too far towards historic accuracy and not enough towards what will make the planet sustainable for all of us. The process to replace windows, for example, is absurd - the paperwork, the stipulations, and the denials for requests to use basic

things like modern, energy-efficient windows. The review process has such a bad reputation that neighbors, contractors, and even City Council members advise people to do projects on the sly without permitting. This indicates a widespread disrespect of the official process. Please, please, please recognize that with climate change and our overburdened planet, we can't afford to make historic preservation the only guiding principle, with a few concessions to energy efficiency. Energy efficiency has got to be equal to historic preservation, if not the top priority.

- Historic designation in Boulder should remain an issue of choice. The city should not expand the control of the departments dealing with historic designation beyond what already exists.
- In many documents, meetings, presentations, etc. you continue to fail to recognize the disdain with which you treat people who live in historic neighborhoods or homes... but you betray yourself with your language. The properties of historic neighborhoods are NOT "RESOURCES". They are people's HOMES, where lives and dreams unfold, where the day to day struggles and joys of life happen. We simply do not see our homes as resources for you to archive in your museum. You must seriously back off in the level of detail at which you micromanage applications. Essentially, your work in this community is done. There is little left for you to preserve. Why do you think the residents of Whittier keep denying your quest to turn their neighborhood and homes into a museum?! They see how the process has failed in the other large district in town (Mapleton) and want absolutely no part of it!
- Cultural history ("the stories") vs. physical history ("the places") - The word "preservation" usually connotes physical places while "history" usually connotes people and events. It appears that there is a desire to bridge the two, but the City's role is about places. The Boulder History Museum and, to a limited extent, Historic Boulder Inc. tend to the people and events. Is that a good division of labor?

11. Please select the key issues that the historic preservation plan should address in order to improve the current program.



Answer Choices	Responses	
Landmark and Historic District Designation	20%	1
Design Review	80%	4

Structures of Merit Program	0%	0
Demolition Review	20%	1
Architectural Surveys	20%	1
Incentives for Property Owners	40%	2
Status as a Certified Local Government	0%	0
Public Outreach and Education	60%	3
Total Respondents: 5		

12. In the last ten years, Boulder has: designated 163 individual landmarks and two historic districts; adopted design guidelines to address sustainability issues; completed a survey of Post-WWII residential resources; and made significant changes to the ordinance regarding the designation, demolition review, and historic district processes to allow for more community input and clarity. **Ten years from now, what should be the main goals and objectives of the Historic Preservation program? What is your idea of a successful program?**

- Maintain appreciation of what has already been designated and do not expand the program.
- Smaller. Simpler. Less micromanaged. Run by staff and board members that are less aloof and more connected to the reality of people trying to live in these neighborhoods. In fact, all members of the board and staff should be required to live in a district and to have actually submitted a project for review by Landmarks.
- The Historic Preservation program has operated essentially separately from other City programs. While this approach keeps the program focused, tensions arise with other City goals and programs. The Historic Preservation program should adjust its design review process and guidelines considering overall City goals, sub-district characteristics, and other city activities such as business districts and pay to park.
- Better education that helps people to see that one new ugly building diminishes all that is around it, and ultimately, a number of these kill the heart of the city. Better education on the lower costs of historic preservation. A system that gets new project designs to be compatible with City guidelines before they come before boards and council, perhaps through a system of incentives.

13. Do you have any other comments that you wish to share?

- Environmental concerns should take precedence over design issues, e.g., replacing windows.
- Historic designation that is forced on a community or an individual property owner is counterproductive to the residents of the city.
- Please institute a competency requirement. Staff/Board must know the HPC and the guidelines like the back of their hand. They must pass objective and independent tests at least every year. FYI, the City of Boulder did not initiate but did endorse formally the designation of the Colorado Chautauqua as a National Historic Landmark district, which occurred in 2006. This is the only NHL in Boulder County, and one of only 22 NHLs in the state. It is a great opportunity to introduce newcomers to preservation in action as well as sustainability and to deepen connections to place and cultural history.

February 12, 2013
City Council/Landmarks Board Joint Study Session
Historic Preservation Plan

City Council: Suzy Ageton, KC Becker, Macon Cowles, Suzanne Jones, George Karakehian, Deputy Mayor Lisa Morzel, Tim Plass, Ken Wilson

Landmarks Board: Chair Mark Gerwing, Kurt Nordback, John Spitzer, Liz Payton, Kirsten Snobeck

Staff: Jane Brautigam, City Manager; David Driskell, Executive Director Community Planning & Sustainability; Susan Richstone, Deputy Director Community Planning & Sustainability; Lesli Ellis, Comprehensive Planning Manager; James Hewat, Historic Preservation Planner; Marcy Cameron, Historic Preservation Planner; Deb Kalish, Senior Assistant City Attorney

Consultant: Mary Therese Anstey, HistoryMatters

PURPOSE: The purpose of the study session was to:

- Provide an update and solicit feedback on the work to date on a Historic Preservation Plan.
- Request input on goals and objectives to guide future direction for the city's historic preservation program.

The work to date on development of the plan includes a program assessment by Dr. Mary Therese Anstey of HistoryMatters, a comparison to other historic preservation programs, a customer survey of applicants, and a public and Landmarks Board meeting held on January 16, 2013.

OVERVIEW OF THE PRESENTATION:
Staff and the consultant presented an overview of the work to date on a Historic Preservation Plan. The City Council was asked for feedback.

COUNCIL AND BOARD RESPONSE TO STUDY SESSION QUESTIONS:

Summary of Council and Board feedback:

1. Do the City Council and the Landmarks Board have comments or questions about the work to date, including the Current Program Assessment and the customer survey responses?

a. The Current Program Assessment included inaccurate information about how the Pearl Street Pedestrian Mall was created as well as the relocation of the depot and must be corrected.
b. Public outreach needs to continue throughout the process and be broadened.
c. Cities nationwide, not just other cities within Colorado, should be used for comparison and evaluation of Boulder's preservation program, particularly ones with similar sustainability goals and demographics.

d. It was suggested that the 50 year demolition threshold should be reconsidered and consideration given to revising the demolition ordinance.
e. Post-war resources and the review process for these resources might be handled differently than other historic resources, allowing for flexibility to transform and evolve, perhaps aided through the development of pattern books. .
f. One council member didn't think there would be much support for historic preservation restrictions being placed on post-war houses such as those in Martin Acres.
g. Councilmember Plass noted that the program assessment was relevant and accurate based on his six years of experience on the Landmarks Board.
h. It was requested that the final assessment and plan include fewer acronyms for ease of reading and understanding.

2. What key issues should the historic preservation plan address?

a. Landmarks Board stated that outreach is the foundation for a successful plan and emphasized the importance of solid public understanding and support for it. The board also considered that the plan should address the following issues:

- Sustainability and its relationship to historic preservation
- Demolition ordinance changes (in particular, looking at giving the board the authority to assess the effect of the proposed demolition, not just whether or not the building is potentially a landmark)
- Creating additional and broader incentives for historic preservation
- Ensuring that design guidelines are transparent, predictable, and applied consistently
- Potentially establishing conservation districts
- Plan for handling historic resources in the event of a natural disaster
- Post-war building stock
- Being proactive instead of reactive, approaching historic preservation with bigger picture, longer-term thinking

b. The City Council generally agreed with the Landmarks Board's list of priorities and added that the plan should address the following issues:

- There is a need for more public outreach and listening to the community and responding to concerns about the Landmarks Board process.
- Work on improving transparency, consistency in how cases are handled, public perception, understanding and the operation of Boulder's preservation program.
- Clarify the vision and what infill in historic districts actually means.
- Embodied energy is an important consideration toward preserving resources.
- City-owned resources should be examined and perhaps designated as historic landmarks and be made publicly accessible.
- The City Council also expressed interest in providing more incentives and stated that they could play a more active role in improving public perception of the historic preservation program and partnering with the Landmarks Board.

3. What should be the primary goals and objectives for the historic preservation plan to help guide the program over the next 10-15 years?

a. The Landmarks Board considered that the goals and objectives should be:

- A more proactive program, increasing outreach and community collaboration and cooperation
- Reassessing demolition ordinance, in particular, looking at giving the board the authority to assess the effect of the proposed demolition, not just whether or not the building is potentially a landmark
- Continue integrating sustainability goals (e.g. retrofitting storm windows)
- Exploring the notion of establishing conservation districts
- Ensuring that design guidelines are current, clear, and predictable
- Providing more incentives to encourage historic preservation
- Establishing post-disaster preparedness for historic resources

b. The City Council agreed and requested additional information about the demolition ordinance to determine whether a change to it would be supported.

4. Do the City Council and the Landmarks Board have any questions regarding the proposed steps and timeline for completion of the plan?

a. The City Council and the Landmarks Board agreed that community input is critical and the city's plans and actions should respect and reflect this input. An expanded community survey was requested. The city website should be used to better communicate and clarify the historic preservation processes.
b. The City Council suggested that the current program be strengthened before it is expanded to include initiatives like conservation districts.
c. The City Council stated that the plan should include an "areas of discussion" section that would outline where energy and resources should be focused over the next 10-15 years.
d. The City Council asked staff to clarify why growth and density are perceived as threats in the report.
e. Development and historic character need to be balanced.

NEXT STEPS

The consultant and the staff team will develop preliminary goals and objectives based on the City Council, Landmarks Board, Planning Board and public's feedback. During February, March and May, stakeholder meetings will be held, followed by the development of a draft plan. In May, the public, Landmarks Board and City Council will review the Draft Historic Preservation Plan.

In July, staff expects to return to City Council for acceptance of the Final Historic Preservation Plan to be submitted to OAHP in July 2013. Staff clarified that after submitting the Plan to the state, revisions can be made and implementation will be on-going.

Historic Preservation Plan Public Meeting
Tuesday, February 19, 2013
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Historic Boulder, Inc Offices, 1123 Spruce

Attendees:
Abby Daniels, Historic Boulder, Inc
Jancy Campbell, Historic Boulder, Inc
Susan Connelly, Colorado Chautauqua Association
Tom Hay, Board of Area Realtors Association
Valerie Yates, Mapleton Hill Neighborhood Representative
Jyotsna Raj, University Hill Neighborhood Representative
Mark Gerwing, Landmarks Board, Historic Preservation Plan Subcommittee
Kirsten Snobeck, Landmarks Board, Historic Preservation Plan Subcommittee

Marcy Cameron, Historic Preservation Planner
James Hewat, Senior Historic Preservation Planner
Mary Therese Anstey, HistoryMatters

Purpose
The purpose of this initial meeting was to gather input from stakeholders on the development of the historic preservation plan. Marcy Cameron gave a brief overview of the project and Mary Therese Anstey answered questions from the group. The discussion was framed around similar questions to those discussed by City Council and the Landmarks Board at their Feb. 12 Joint Study Session, regarding the work to date, key issues the plan should address, potential goals and objectives for the program, and comments about the process. The meeting ended around 8:00 p.m.

DRAFT

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

1. **Do you have comments about the work to date, including the Current Program Assessment and the customer survey responses?**
    - Comparison Cities: Look at other cities with similar sustainability initiatives (i.e. Portland).
    - Purpose: Clarify why the plan is being developed now.
    - Approach: Clearly define the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the current program.
    - Objectivity: Current Program Assessment is very positive; should take a more critical look at the program, acknowledge its weaknesses as well as its strengths (i.e. lack of predictability, consistency of process).
    - The program has many good aspects, and its success is evident as one walks through the neighborhoods/downtown.

2. **What key issues should the historic preservation plan address?**
    - Education and Outreach (Clarity of Process and Perception of Program)
        - Require regular training for Board and staff.
        - Develop brochures for realtors, contractors and property owners.
        - Improve the website; use as a tool to disseminate information more effectively.
    - Perception:
        - Lots of hearsay/myths about preservation being perpetuated.
        - Don't rely on neighbors to educate new property owners about the process; many myths are perpetuated this way.

- Design Review:
    - Need for more consistency and predictability in decisions.
    - LB members should stick to the guidelines- not personal opinion- in decision making. Members should be flexible, not overzealous.
        - Consider different rules for homeowners and commercial property owners
    - Design Guidelines should be updated regularly (i.e. to address pools and alternative materials; to provide a consistent framework for items not specifically addressed by the guidelines).
    - Address issue of incremental change/net effect on a property (serial LACs).
    - Improve clarity of process, make less onerous.

- Sustainability
    - Promote inherent sustainability of the preservation of existing structures.
    - Continued integration of sustainability and historic preservation in the HP program is important.

- Enforcement:
    - Unpredictable: reality is that there are "middle of the night" alterations.
    - Inconsistent: some cases enforced; others not
    - Demolition by neglect: how is this handled?

- Integration/Balance of Historic Preservation With Other City Initiatives
    - Housing/Accessory Dwelling Units
    - Sustainability/Greenpoints

- Clarify vision: what is being protected and why?

- *Incentives- more carrot, less stick- take a proactive approach to preservation.*

- *Changing Perspectives:* How to deal with the post WWII housing stock and more generally how to define the shifting view of what is "historic". While Martin Acres and other areas may not seem worthy of preservation to many today, the perception in 50 years may well be very different. How do you address that ever changing perspective?

3. What should be the primary goals and objectives for the historic preservation plan to help guide the program over the next 10-15 years?

- Education and Outreach:
    - Host events to educate property owners, realtors, residents about program:
        - Preservation Road Show: a social and educational way to reach out; provide info to homeowners about process and program.
        - Design Guideline tour: examples of what worked, what didn't
    - Strengthen partnerships: share resources, partner with property owners/neighborhood associations.
        - Joint LB/HBI annual meetings to strengthen partnership.
        - Partner to host lectures, open houses, walking tours, etc.
        - Develop a brochure highlighting the benefits and responsibilities of owning a designated property and outlining the process (i.e. Historic Denver's brochure)

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- Build Community Support/Improve Perception
    - Improve perception (through education, increased predictability of process, consistency in decision making).
    - Predictability of Process
        - No unwritten rules
    - Simplification/Clarification
        - Use website as a communication tool
    - Simplify the Landmark Alteration Certificate application

- Improve Consistency, Objectivity, Predictability of Design Review
    - The DRC should be as objective as possible, and shouldn't insert personal preference into design review.
        - A series of examples of appropriate solutions for alterations may help illustrate what the expectations are.
        - Net effect should be considered by the DRC.
        - DRC should allow some flexibility, and consider affordability- meeting the design guidelines often more expensive than a DIY project.

- Integrate Energy Efficiency and Historic Preservation
    - Windows: encourage an energy audit for window replacement applicants.
    - Greenpoints- increase credit for retaining an existing structure.
    - Educate public/board/staff about the inherent sustainability of historic preservation through lecture series, website and brochures.

- Balance historic preservation and private property rights
    - Promote the impact historic preservation has had on creating/preserving Boulder's unique community character and sense of place.

- Consistent Enforcement
    - Shouldn't be neighbor-driven- this could harm perception.

- Branding (i.e. Saving Places)
    - Use Boulder's unique character/sense of place and emotional connection to place to promote historic preservation.

- Establish a new model of preservation (Conservation Districts)
    - Traditional preservation approach may not be appropriate for Post-War resources;
    - University Hill residents may be open to historic district designation in the future; would support a "Preservation Light" approach, i.e. a Conservation District
- *Build in an automatic review timeline to update the plan periodically.*

4. Do you have any questions regarding the proposed steps and timeline for completion of the plan?

- Public Input: Ensure adequate time to advertise and notify public and stakeholders for feedback.

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Draft Summary of Planning Board Comments
Development of a Historic Preservation Plan
April 4, 2013

J. Hewat gave an overview of the purpose of the development of a historic preservation plan and the work to date.

B. Bowen noted that the negative public perception of the historic preservation program may be because applicants come to the city and are stopped from what they want to do. Incentives would help applicants achieve what they want to do.

S. Weaver noted that that is the nature of regulation and effort should be made to make the process more positive.

B. Bowen acknowledged the board's current efforts to restart the SOM program and increase outreach efforts. Suggested that the LB and PB collaborate to recognize SOMs of the future- i.e. successful contemporary buildings.

M. Young noted that regarding the perception that design guidelines are applied inconsistently, that is the nature of design guidelines, since it is a case-by-case review. Suggested that applicants be made aware of the case-by-case nature early in the process.

S. Weaver suggested that a book be created to illustrate successful projects so applicants can see what has been done.

L. May noted that the LB process is similar to PB's Site Review process, with analysis of relevant criteria. The perception of a lack of predictability and difficultly of process is shared. The board changes with its members.

B. Bowen noted that both boards should strive toward clarity and predictability of process. Suggested that an envelope be identified so people know what can and can't be done; i.e. identifying key attributes of a building.

L. May noted that education and outreach is a key issue and that efforts should be made to inform the public about the benefits of preservation- the purpose of the program and to provide outreach regarding the implications of owning a designated building.

S. Weaver suggested that notification of landmark status should be a real estate requirement, i.e. when an offer is made. It could also be an opportunity to educate property owners about the benefits of designation.

A. Brockett noted that the integration of energy efficiency and historic preservation should be a priority in the plan.

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L. May noted that there isn't a conflict between historic preservation and energy efficiency, and any historic building can be made to be as energy efficient as a new one. Education is needed to encourage a holistic approach, such as insulating the attic rather than jumping to a highly visible change of replacement windows or solar panels.

S. Weaver expressed concern regarding zoning, and asked for clarification of how properties adjacent to landmarked buildings and historic districts should be treated and inquired how other cities treated this interface.

B. Bowen suggested holding shared concept reviews in which the board could jointly discuss a proposed project, citing the desire for a process for projects like the former Daily Camera site.

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Goals to Guide the City of Boulder's Historic Preservation Program:

Establish a Long-term Vision and Develop a ~~Proactive~~ Dynamic Plan for Boulder's Historic Preservation Program.

A strong plan is the foundation of a relevant and successful historic preservation program.

- Ensure the protection of significant historic, architectural and cultural resources;
- Designate individual landmarks and historic districts that are representative of Boulder's richly layered history;
- Align preservation and other city policies;
- Identify, Evaulate and p~~P~~rioritize resources and areas that are historically significant and develop strategies for their protection.
- Work collaboratively to d~~D~~evelop specialized approaches to recognize and preserve post-war residential neighborhoods;
- Continue to identify potentially significant resources from the recent past;
- Develop a post-disaster response plan;
- Promote the inherent sustainability of historic preservation;

Increase Public Outreach and Education

The city aims to improve understanding of the role and value of historic preservation in Boulder.

- Offer a wide variety of educational opportunities for the ~~public~~community, including print, interactive and electronic media~~;~~
- Develop internal educational programs for city officials and staff;
- Interpret Boulder's historic, architectural and environmental resources for residents, visitors and heritage tourists.
- Increase availability of information for current and potential property owners regarding the benefits and responsibilities of owning a designated property.

Foster Community Support for Historic Preservation

Public support and citizen engagement is vital to the success of an effective and dynamic historic preservation program.

- Collaborate with varied partners within the community to better communicate preservation goals. ~~Communicate more effectively with a broad audience;~~
- Promote and better communicate benefits of preservation;
- Celebrate preservation successes *(i.e. Chautauqua or the Downtown Mall)*.
- *Provide guidance and support on how to reuse old buildings.*

- *Develop and celebrate the stories of Boulder's history through signage (note: many people feel a greater sense of place once they learn about the history of a place/personal connection to bricks and mortar)*
- *Acknowledge and communicate that preservation values within the community are continuously evolving.*

Ensure Clear and, Predictable and Consistent Review Processes that Reflect Preservation Values

Public feedback indicates historic preservation review processes can seem inconsistent/arbitrary confusing and onerous.

- Provide excellent customer service;
- Streamline Simplify forms and paperwork;
- Assure alignment of preservation and other city policies;
- Provide excellent customer service;
- Enhance website content and format and ensure complete information is provided in an easily-accessible manner;
- Assure demolition ordinance allows for effective protection of historic buildings;
- Refine Establish enforcement practices to ensure consistent compliance.
-

Continue to Emphasize the Relationship Between Sustainability and Historic Preservation

The preservation and reuse of historic buildings is inherently sustainable and consistent with the city's Climate Action Plan and sustainability goals.

- Continue to integrate historic preservation and sustainability goals and policies;
- Continue to promote research into ways that historic resources can be made more energy efficient while retaining their historic integrity;
- Recognize innovative examples of projects where historic preservation and sustainability have been successfully melded.
- Promote the inherent sustainability of old buildings;
- Better address, communicate and innovate around the issue of energy efficiency and window replacement.

Foster a ~~Dynamic~~ Historic Preservation Program That Is Dynamic, Innovative, and Reflective of Community Sensibilities and Values.

A healthy historic preservation program is one that continues to grow and illustrate all eras of a city's history.

- Assure continuity of program through on-going preservation efforts;
- Retain accurate and complete survey records for all buildings and sites fifty years or older;
- ~~Develop specialized approaches to recognize and preserve post-war residential neighborhoods;~~
- Support the Landmarks Board and the public in their stewardship of Boulder's historic, architectural, and ~~environmental~~ cultural assets;
- Maintain adequate staffing to perform all regular duties of the program plus City Council and Landmarks Board requested special projects;
- Obtain adequate funding to cover existing program and planned expansion;
- Assess and update preservation plan.

Better Publicize Current Incentives and Offer Additional ~~Incentives~~ Initiatives That ~~to~~ Encourage the Preservation of Historic Buildings

Incentives may enable and encourage property owners to maintain and preserve historic buildings.

- Promote/publicize existing incentives *(i.e. fee waiver increase)*
- Introduce new incentives, such as a loan or grant program, to encourage greater participation in preservation and increase positive perception.
- Develop non-financial based incentives, such as the development and publication of historical narratives for designated buildings.

Notes:
Consider expansion of incentives to Structures of Merit program
Publicize research on property value retention

Other Notes:

Move/Add to Implementation Plan:

- Assure demolition ordinance allows for effective protection of historic buildings;
- Add information to the city's website detailing guidelines for each of Boulder's historic districts as a means of better informing the public.
- Add information to the County Assessor website to increase awareness of designation for current and potential property owners.
- Publicize incentives online
- Create a uniform design guideline template for future historic districts to ensure completeness.
- Inform applicants of case-by-case nature of Landmarks Review (due to rotating Landmarks Board, site conditions, etc)
- Promote personal stories of place by placing a plaque at each designated property.
- Use an on-going publication to increase awareness of Boulder's history and preservation stories;
- Historic Boulder house registry for designated properties (increased education)?
- Establish neighborhood liaisons for historic districts.
- Create a "Master List" of potentially significant properties (Proactive approach)

Other notes:

- History of the University of Colorado's part in Boulder's history should be further documented/acknowledged (i.e. professor's housing)

May 1, 2013 Public Meeting
Small Group Feedback (combined)

Goals to Guide the City of Boulder's Historic Preservation Program:

Establish a Long-term Vision and Develop a Proactive Plan for Boulder's Historic Preservation Program.

A strong plan is the foundation of a relevant and successful historic preservation program.

- Ensure the protection of significant historic, architectural and cultural resources;
- Designate individual landmarks and historic districts that are representative of Boulder's richly layered history;
- Prioritize resources and areas that are historically significant and develop strategies for their protection. (productive…)
- Public outreach when thinking about designation.
- Disaster Plan
- Different criteria for post-war buildings
- Work efficiently, collaboratively and fairly with homeowners.

Increase Public Outreach and Education

The city aims to improve understanding of the role and value of historic preservation in Boulder.

- Offer a wide variety of educational opportunities for the public;
- Develop internal educational programs for city officials and staff;
- Interpret Boulder's historic, architectural and environmental resources for visitors and heritage tourists.
- Value and enjoyment in historic preservation – broadly celebrate
- Increase outreach toavailability of information for current and potential property owners in historic districts (forum, informational meetings) regarding the benefits and responsibilities of owning a designated property.
-

Foster Community Support for Historic Preservation

Public support and citizen engagement is vital to the success of an effective and dynamic historic preservation program.

- Develop/Innovate/Collaborate with varied partners;
- Communicate more effectively with a broad audience;
- Promote benefits of preservation;
- Celebrate preservation successes.

Comment [c1]: Too General

Comment [c2]: Language implies a top-down approach; info/education should flow both ways between LB/staff and community

Comment [c3]: This section should also be about internal education programs (In Reach as well as Outreach)

Comment [c4]: Creates awareness

Comment [c5]: Feeling of disenfranchisement, energy policies, historic designation not a positive experience.

Comment [c6]: Pragmatism vs purism

Comment [c7]: Language implies top-down approach

Comment [c8]: Implementation Plan: Host workshops like Greeley's from Dust to Dazzle; provide list of vetted contractors.

Comment [c9]: Should be both ways—staff/LB easily accessible for communication

Comment [c10]: i.e. a Preservation Party for historic district designation

Comment [c14]: Choose intact areas for historic district designation, not in response to scrapes/demos

- *FocusIncrease visibility of Historic Preservation program through the use of on history/culture and architecture.-going publications*
- *Establish neighborhood liaisons*
- *Policies should match the image/idea of Boulder as a progressive city.(testimonials- neighbor to neighbor resource)*

Ensure Clear, Predictable and Consistent Review Processes

Public feedback indicates historic preservation review processes can ~~seem~~ be inconsistent, arbitrary ~~confusing~~ and onerous.

- Provide excellent customer service;
- Guidelines should be applied objectively.
- Streamline forms and paperwork;
- Assure alignment of preservation and other city policies;
- ~~Provide excellent customer service;~~
- Enhance website content and format;
- Assure demolition ordinance allows for effective protection of historic buildings;
- Address non-contributing structures;
- Refine enforcement practices to ensure consistent compliance.
- Non-contributing buildings construction outside of the period of significance in a historic district should be handled differently (currently in design guidelines, needs more clarity)

Continue to Emphasize the Relationship Between Sustainability and Historic Preservation

The preservation and reuse of historic buildings is inherently sustainable and consistent with the city's Climate Action Plan and sustainability goals.

- Continue to integrate historic preservation and sustainability goals and policies;
- Continue to promote research into ways that historic resources can be made more energy efficient while retaining their historic integrity;
- Recognize innovative examples of projects where historic preservation and sustainability have been successfully melded.
- Partner with sustainability community to increase support for historic preservation (embodied energy)
- Promote guidelines of how to repair/rehabilitate historic windows
- Windows

Foster a Dynamic Historic Preservation Program

Comment [c11]: i.e. Boulder County Business Report or other publications—perhaps our own website?

Comment [c12]: Strengthen relationship with the press (i.e. positive stories, like the Historic Preservation Month Activities and Awards)

Comment [c13]: Implementation Plan: Booth at neighborhood events/fairs (Boulder Creek Fair, MHHD Porchfest and Yard Sale.

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Comment [c15]: Like title as is.

Comment [c16]: In Reach-- regular training and education for staff

Comment [c17]: Guidelines should be as objective and numeric as possible to minimize inconsistency and vagueness

Comment [c18]: Demolition and non-contributing structures are the main issues that should be addressed

Comment [c19]: Important to explain justification for guidelines

Comment [c20]: "Mission creep"; what did the public sign up for to begin with?

Comment [c21]: Promote the windows study

Comment [c22]: Implementation Plan: i.e. house tour

Comment [c23]: Provide a list of approved contractors, like the Smart Regs program (may go under internal coordination)

Comment [c24]: i.e. Certified replacement (Floral Park)

Comment [c25]: Issue feeds negative perception; reviewed too closely/micromanaged

A healthy historic preservation program is one that continues to grow and illustrate all eras of a city's history.

- Retain accurate and complete survey records for all buildings and sites fifty years or older;
- Develop specialized approaches to recognize and preserve (significant? unique?) post-war residential neighborhoods;
- Support the Landmarks Board in their stewardship of Boulder's historic, architectural, and environmental assets;
- Maintain adequate staffing to perform all regular duties of the program plus City Council and Landmarks Board requested special projects;
- Obtain adequate funding to cover existing program and planned expansion;
- Assess and update preservation plan.
- Conservation Districts
- Integrate accessibility and historic preservation

Comment [c26]: Moved to 1st Goal

Comment [c27]: Refine

Comment [c28]: Acknowledge existing Compatible Development regulations- perhaps regs are already in place to preserve character of post-war neighborhoods.

Comment [c29]: Similar to how non-contributing buildings in HDs should be treated. Mass/scale and site layout

Comment [c30]: As the baby boomer population ages, this will become a serious factor to consider

Comment [c31]: This may go with coordination w/ other city depts., i.e. building code, energysmart regs

Offer Additional Incentives to Encourage the Preservation of Historic Buildings

Incentives may enable and encourage property owners to maintain and preserve historic buildings.

- Introduce new incentives, such as a loan or grant program, to encourage greater participation in preservation and increase positive perception.
- Promote/publicize existing incentives

Comment [c32]: i.e. Plaque program for non-designated structures—tell the story

Comment [c33]: Buildings constructed outside of the period of significance in a district are not eligible for state tax credits—other incentives? Relief in the review process?

Comment [c34]: Windows workshops! Other key issues.

Comment [c35]: Identify funding sources; more carrot, less stick, like Open Space

May 1, 2013 Landmarks Board Meeting
Landmarks Board Feedback

Goals to Guide the City of Boulder's Historic Preservation Program:

Establish a Long-term Vision and Develop a Proactive Plan for Boulder's Historic Preservation Program.

A strong plan is the foundation of a relevant and successful historic preservation program.

- Ensure the protection of significant historic, architectural and cultural resources;
- Designate individual landmarks and historic districts that are representative of Boulder's richly layered history;
- Prioritize resources and areas that are historically significant and develop strategies for their protection.
- Work collaboratively…(recognize owners as stewards rather than applicants)
-

Increase Public Outreach and Education

The city aims to improve understanding of the role and value of historic preservation in Boulder.

- Offer a wide variety of educational opportunities for the public;
- Develop internal educational programs for city officials and staff;
- Interpret Boulder's historic, architectural and environmental resources for visitors and heritage tourists.
- Engage the community
- Be a resource for property owners
- Make information easily accessible
-

Foster Community Support for Historic Preservation

Public support and citizen engagement is vital to the success of an effective and dynamic historic preservation program.

- Collaborate with varied partners, including neighborhoods and property owners.
- Communicate more effectively with a broad audience;
- Promote benefits of preservation;
- Celebrate preservation successes.
- Raise profile of historic preservation within the community
-

Comment [c1]: Good/mission statement, aligns with Hp ordinance; "proactive" a good word choice

Comment [c2]: Ensure each are equally valued

Comment [c3]: Should this be more specific? I.e. agricultural or working-class housing.

Comment [c4]: Note: should NON-historic resources be identified (i.e. areas that can/should be improved); strategize what the city will look like in 30 years; Planning Board and Landmarks Board Study Session.

Comment [c5]: i.e. webinars on the top 5 issues

Comment [c6]: Clarify

Comment [c7]: Communication should be a two-way street: interact/engage- i.e. annual meetings with historic district residents (provide opportunity for open dialogue/hold meetings elsewhere)

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Comment [c8]: Implementation Plan: Booths, workshop demonstrations (like Greeley), Two-way communication- go to the neighborhoods; piggyback on other city events; know your audience (interest vs. required interaction)—outreach to different groups; Improve the website.

Comment [c9]: Attend neighborhood events/write newsletter updates; make it fun.

May 1, 2013 Landmarks Board Meeting
Landmarks Board Feedback

Ensure Clear, Predictable and Consistent Review Processes

~~*Public feedback indicates historic preservation review processes can seem confusing and onerous.*~~

- Provide excellent customer service;
- Streamline forms and paperwork;
- Assure alignment of preservation and other city policies;
- Enhance website content and format;
- Assure demolition ordinance allows for effective protection of historic buildings;
- Refine enforcement practices to ensure consistent compliance.
- Engage public in modification of review processes
- Regular meetings with the neighborhood groups to continue/foster dialogue.
- Structure the guidelines to maximize objectivity

Comment [c10]: Reword to be more positive- what are we trying to achieve?

Comment [c11]: Explore enforcement procedures in other communities

Comment [c12]: Create opportunities for LB to listen.

Comment [c13]: Windows matrix helpful, objective.

Continue to ~~Emphasize~~ Explore the Relationship Between Sustainability and Historic Preservation and Foster Innovation .

The preservation and reuse of historic buildings is inherently sustainable and consistent with the city's Climate Action Plan and sustainability goals.

- Continue to integrate historic preservation and sustainability goals and policies;
- Continue to promote research into ways that historic resources can be made more energy efficient while retaining their historic integrity;
- Recognize innovative examples of projects where historic preservation and sustainability have been successfully melded.
- Promote and reward inherent sustainability
- **Continue to be a leader.**

Comment [c14]: Address more stringent 2012 Building Code Requirements

Comment [c15]: Greenpoints- make retention of a building worth a substantial amount ; Provide more information on our website (like FAQ of benefits to keeping historic windows)

~~Foster~~ Provide Support for a Dynamic Historic Preservation Program

A healthy historic preservation program is one that continues to grow and illustrate all eras of a city's history.

Comment [c16]: Redundant? Combine with Goal #1?

- Assure continuity of program through on-going preservation efforts;
- Retain accurate and complete survey records for all buildings and sites fifty years or older;
- Develop specialized approaches to recognize and preserve post-war residential neighborhoods;
- Support the Landmarks Board, staff and property owners -in their stewardship of Boulder's historic, architectural, and environmental assets;
- Maintain adequate staffing to perform all regular duties of the program plus City Council and Landmarks Board requested special projects;
- Obtain adequate funding to cover existing program and planned expansion;

Comment [c17]: Define- support from whom?

- Assess and update preservation plan.

Comment [c18]: Action item

Offer Additional Incentives to Encourage the Preservation of Historic Buildings

Incentives may enable and encourage property owners to maintain and preserve historic buildings.

- Promote/publicize existing incentives
- Introduce new incentives, such as a loan or grant program, to encourage greater participation in preservation and increase positive perception.

Comment [c19]: Look to other cities to see what has worked (i.e. revolving fund, program to act as a bridge; however, be sensitive to subsidy of high-value properties when there are other needs, such as affordable housing.

DRAFT SUMMARY
PLAN-Boulder
Development of a Historic Preservation Plan
April 26, 2013

Panel
Alan Boles, PLAN-Boulder
James Hewat, City of Boulder
Mark Gerwing, Chair of the Landmarks Board
Kathryn Barth, Former LB member, Historic Boulder
Catherine Schweiger, Mapleton Hill resident

Welcoming remarks by A. Boles

Presentation by James Hewat on the purpose of the development of a Historic Preservation Plan, work to date and schedule moving forward.

M. Gerwing acknowledged that the development of the plan has been a large effort and that it's an opportunity to look at the historic preservation program and identify ways it can be improved. He emphasized the Landmark Board's desire to reflect the community's values.

K. Barth commented that PLAN-Boulder has a long history of concern for Boulder's development. She encouraged attendance at Landmarks Board meetings from Plan-Boulder and environmental groups, citing the natural partnership between the groups.

C. Schweiger noted that she helped establish the Mapleton Hill Historic District and has seen process change overtime. She is concerned that the University Hill and Whittier neighborhoods have not elected to become historic districts. She expressed concern for the arbitrary and capricious review processes, citing her son's recent denial of a standing-seam metal roof in the Mapleton Hill Historic District, and feels that a primary goal of the plan should be clear, predictable and consistent review processes.

K. Barth noted that because of the rotating nature of the Landmarks design review committee, there are occasional inconsistencies, but on the other hand, Historic Preservation review processes in nature is more subjective than the other land use review processes.

C. Schweiger stated that buildings considered to be non-contributing to a historic district should be allowed greater flexibility.

K. Barth disagreed, noting that non-contributing buildings could negatively impact the character of the neighborhood and so they should be compatible.

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J. Hewat commented that the perception of historic preservation reviews as being arbitrary and capricious is common. It differs from other types of land use and building code review because there are so many different situations. He noted that in his experience, new board members want to change the review process and create complete objectivity, but after a few months they realize that it is more nuanced than they thought. He noted that the vast majority of cases are reviewed consistently, but the difficult cases are what the public often remembers.

K. Schweiger noted that the community has changed since the Mapleton Hill Historic District was created, and it was easier in the early years. Today there are big house and swimming pool phases that make the review process more difficult.

M. Gerwing noted that the constituency of the Landmarks Board changes and that the projects that come in multiple times are usually the problematic ones. Each Landmarks Board can bring a different viewpoint to the board. He noted that the process can be improved, but because each property is different, there is not such a concern with precedence. He noted that the collaborative nature of the Landmark design review committee- that an applicant can present schematic sketches and get a basic read - is unique and one of the strongest parts of the program.

L. Payton stated that she serves on both the PLAN-Boulder and Landmark boards but due to the quasi-judicial nature of the Landmarks Board, she cannot discuss projects that are currently under review. She noted that she was present for Ms. Scheweiger's son's review and that she was concerned that some of the information Ms. Schweiger presented was anecdotal as she was not at the Ldrc reviews.

A member of the audience asked the panel about how the post-war resources, such as the many houses built in Fraiser Meadows, would be handled.

M. Gerwing noted that the provision in demolition review that allows staff to review demolition applications for houses built after 1940 acknowledges the high percentage of building stock constructed after World War II. He noted that there are many challenges in those areas, such as windows (aluminum frame instead of operable wood windows), sustainability and energy efficiency. He noted that he is particularly interested in the recent past, including the work of Charles Haertling, and acknowledged that the board will face new challenges with post-war resources.

J. Hewat mentioned that the context of Post-War Boulder done several years ago found that the significance of the post-war development is in the overall pattern rather than individual resources. He noted that the residents encountered during the project expressed pride in their neighborhoods and often expressed concern with the changing scale and character.

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Jyotsna Raj stated that there are many resources in the University Hill neighborhood worth preserving and that there should be a reenergized attempt to designate a historic district, noting that the last effort was too broad.

J. Hewat noted that the Historic Preservation Ordinance was changed after the 2002 attempt to designate University Hill as a historic district in order to allow for more community input. He said today smaller districts are more manageable in terms of building community support.

J. Raj encouraged the city to approach owners of owner-occupied houses about historic districting.

Susan Osborne commented that she recently visited Charleston, SC and was puzzled over support of preservation there, noting a successful and well-attended hous and garden tour. She encouraged that the city look to Charleston, and determine how to make Historic Preservation more of an honor rather than a burden.

J. Hewat noted that often when people learn about the story of a place, it becomes more of the shared consciousness. In Charleston, heritage tourism is recognized as of great value. In Boulder the value is more focused on the natural environment but that the historic built and natural environments are very similar..

J. Raj pointed out that outreach is important, but the value of historic designation should be made obvious. Why is it a good thing?

An attendee pointed out that streetscapes are important in historic districts. Pride has gone away. Disappointed in the city reviews changes to houses buildings but the landscaping is neglected. City should take pride in landscape- like Charleston and Atlanta.

Sara pointed out that the next approach to designating University Hill as a historic district will have to be much different. Involves owner and renter occupied houses, cityscape issues, CU/student housing.

Ann Norwood- asked what criteria are being used in review of post-1940 demolitions.

J. Hewat responded that these buildings were reviewed in terms of their rarity as many buildings from the post-war period display repetitive design.

K. Barth – spoke of a 1950s house in here neighborhood with a Swiss Chalet roof. Young family has moved in, taken such good care of it. Old Thunderbird sitting in driveway. There is real value to this period

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K. Schweiger suggested that maybe it is not a good use of resources to review buildings from the post-war period.

M. Cameron – pointed out that speaking as a 20 something historic preservationist, usually a children's don't value the history of their parents, but do of their grandparents. The post-war period is a legitimate chapter is Boulder's history.

Boles – Suggested that perhaps the city should buy block of Martin Acres as little Williamsburg- rent to families sympathetic to post-war history to establish a living history museum.

M. Gerwing - 50 year rule doesn't just encompass tract housing- also Haertling, Wagener, etc. Exceptional 1960s- national significance. Remarkable collection of modern architecture in Boulder. He pointed out it is difficult for people to see this kind of architecture lumped in with Martin Acres.

B. Schell Pointed out that public comment should define historic decisions. Why have a public meeting if their say isn't counted? Would add more power and legitimacy to historic preservation. Whittier neighbors are wary of Landmarks Process.

An attendee pointed out that the process is daunting, fearful process. It should be allow for more creativity.

M. Gerwing stated that the board's list of priorities has included changes to the demolition ordinance but city council support has been lacking.

S. Osborne said she would like demolition ordinance revised - issue of small houses that we insist be saved, but then a huge addition that don't preserve the historic part of the house

J. Hewat pointed out that in the current demolition process, what's being proposed can't be considered only whether the building might be a landmark. Looking at the effect of the "demolition" would be an expansion of the Landmark Board's powers.

Sara: Suggested that we should look at demolition ordinance ordinances in other cities.

B. Schell stated that a historic district in Whittier will not occur until the demolition ordinance is fixed.

L. Payton stated that the city council is is being careful that there aren't any unintended consequences in the current changes to the definition of demolition which is why this particular change is taking so long.

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K. Barth- said that designating over an owners objection was an important powe and without it landmark buildings like the Arnett Fullen house, Boulder Theater, Boulderado would probably not have been saved.

Ruth- Stated that Martin Acres residents do love their houses- people are improving houses but that the neighborhood is evolving organically. The changing character is special and houses are expanding as needed.

M. Gerwing - Martin Acres issue- everyone feels that something should be preserved. Maybe there would be support for a conservation district with guidelines to prevent giant houses. Incentives might include loosening compatible development regulations if in conservastion district.

Fenno Hoffman pointed out that owner-occupied important in allowing for incrementally evolve houses and that trust should be given that neighbors will make good decisions.

J. Hewat stated that the Ldrc process is collaborative, iterative. Property owner often express that they have felt projects have been improved through the process.

L. Payton responded to F. Hoffman saying do trust neighbors, but not always - speculative buyers.

Closing remarks by A. Boles

DRAFT

Stakeholder Group Meeting
Historic Preservation Plan, Themes and Recommendations
Tuesday, June 11, 2013
Historic Boulder, 1123 Spruce

1) **Are these the correct themes?**
In general, the stakeholder group agreed with the proposed themes.

2) **Do you have specific comments on the preliminary recommendations?**

HISTORIC RESOURCE PROTECTION

- (3) Identify and prioritize underrepresented resources to ensure the protection of Boulder's overall development patterns. This may include developing historic contexts and resurveying resources associated with African American and Hispanic history, the University of Colorado, Boulder's agricultural past and significant buildings of the recent past. (Note: combine identified topics for further research)
- Publicize existing incentives and consider initiating new financial, such as a low-interest grant or loan program and other incentives, such as ~~relief~~ from the energy code for designated properties. ("relief" implies conflict between historic preservation and energy efficiency)
- (2) Maintain accurate survey records and utilize information to identify and encourage the designation of significant resources and areas.
- (2) Revive the Structures of Merit program.
- (3) Develop additional historic context reports to better understand key themes related to Boulder's development ~~(i.e. the University of Colorado, Boulder's agricultural past).~~
- (2) Explore strategies to protect smaller buildings less likely to be designated and more vulnerable for demolition/common alterations like replacement siding make a larger difference on modest structures) (i.e. allowance of lot subdivision, establishing a funding resource).
- (1) Identify and prioritize the designation of city-owned buildings that are eligible for landmark designation (BVCP).
- Increase coordination between city and county to designate significant, publicly-owned buildings (i.e. Haertling structures in the county).
- (3) Explore the creation of smaller historic districts (i.e. sections of the Whittier neighborhood, Uni Hill- Commercial)
- Support (celebrate, highlight, honor) existing landmarks and historic districts. (i.e. description of the significance and rationale behind designation on the website)
- Funding for accessory buildings
- Expand options to preservation outside of district (conservation districts, establish a community-wide preservation ethic).
- (1) Consider creating an archeological program that identifies, designates, and protects historic and prehistoric archeological resources. (BVCP) -Moved from "Program Operations"

- Explore innovative options for the recognition and protection of postwar buildings and neighborhoods. Moved from "Program Operations"

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

- (5) Strengthen partnerships with the community, Historic Boulder, Inc ~~and~~ other local organizations to foster historic preservation. (Clarify roles- Historic Boulder) (add partners from goal)
- (1) Establish neighborhood liaisons to strengthen communication and collaboration between property owners and the city. Liaisons may act as the point of contact ~~for~~ between the neighbors interested in learning about historic preservation ~~and the organization of community outreach events.~~ (i.e. informal coffee gatherings) (–include in trainings)(Listen/open dialogue)
- Establish collaboration opportunities such as a "preservation roadshow" , a ~~and other events, such as a~~ smartphone app or farmer's market booth, in which Landmarks Board members, staff, and residents can engage in a collaborative dialogue about historic preservation.
- (5) Organize community events to positively raise the profile of historic preservation in Boulder; record and share stories of Boulder's historic places to foster Boulder's sense of place. (Historic Preservation Day/Week, Then and Now slideshows)
- (4) Utilize the website to provide clear and easily-accessible information regarding review processes, design guidelines and incentive programs.
- (2) Send links to design guidelines and other information to architects, landscape architects, contractors, realtors and new owners of landmarked properties and those located in a historic district.
- (1) Recognize projects that effectively integrate historic preservation and sustainability.
- Interpretations: illustrate what happens without historic district designation (like Washington DC's urban renewal signage)
- Annual recognition of "Structures of Merit"- either designed ones or buildings/places that deserve recognition.
- Recognize that preservation happens without designation—existing community value.
- (4) Windows: open dialogue/listen to concerns

PROGRAM OPERATIONS

- Enhance board training and expand initial orientation program for new members and pursue ongoing training opportunities. (include liaisons) (Training should be Boulder specific- conflict resolution, historic preservation and sustainability topics, high development pressures etc)
- (2) Explore ways to make review processes more efficient (i.e., allowing increased administrative review of minor alterations) (Remove review requirement for small alterations, i.e. roofing, paint colors, etc)~~.~~
- Revise applications and forms to be streamlined, clear and intuitive.
- (1) Assess and update design guidelines as needed; create a comprehensive template for future historic district design guidelines to ensure they are ~~comprehensive~~ complete and clarify that they are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

- ~~Explore innovative options for the recognition and protection of postwar buildings and neighborhoods.~~
- Increase awareness and support of historic preservation by making an annual presentation to City Council highlighting preservation successes.
- (1) Reassess the demolition ordinance's effectiveness in preserving significant buildings.
- ~~Consider creating an archeological program that identifies, designates, and protects historic and prehistoric archeological resources. (BVCP)~~
- (4) Establish a process to follow-up on Landmark Alteration Certificates to ensure compliance with the design guidelines and consistent enforcement policies.
- Develop a disaster response plan for the historic preservation program.
- Evaluate the current Greenpoints program and energy code adoption to ensure integration between the city's sustainability and historic preservation goals.
- Consider establishing a contractor licensing or certification program for work in historic districts.
- (2) Add designation information to the County Assessor website.
- (1) Consider adding a contractor certification program specific to work in Historic Districts (optional, would create a list of contractors with a demonstrated knowledge of the design guidelines and process).

3) What are the top recommendations that should be included in the plan?

Historic Resource Protection

- (3) Identify and prioritize underrepresented resources to ensure the protection of Boulder's overall development patterns. This may include developing historic contexts and resurveying resources associated with African American and Hispanic history, the University of Colorado, Boulder's agricultural past and significant buildings of the recent past. (Note: combine identified topics for further research)
- (3) Develop additional historic context reports to better understand key themes related to Boulder's development ~~(i.e. the University of Colorado, Boulder's agricultural past).~~
- (3) Explore the creation of smaller historic districts (i.e. sections of the Whittier neighborhood, Uni Hill- Commercial)l; (1) Identify and prioritize the designation of city-owned buildings that are eligible for landmark designation (BVCP).
- (2) Maintain accurate survey records and utilize information to identify and encourage the designation of significant resources and areas.
- (2) Revive the Structures of Merit program.
- (2) Explore strategies to protect smaller buildings less likely to be designated and more vulnerable for demolition/common alterations like replacement siding make a larger difference on modest structures) (i.e. allowance of lot subdivision, establishing a funding resource).
- (1) Consider creating an archeological program that identifies, designates, and protects historic and prehistoric archeological resources. (BVCP) -Moved from "Program Operations"

Community Engagement and Collaboration

- (5) Strengthen partnerships with the community, Historic Boulder, Inc ~~and~~ other local organizations to foster historic preservation. (Clarify roles- Historic Boulder) (add partners from goal)
- (5) Organize community events to positively raise the profile of historic preservation in Boulder; record and share stories of Boulder's historic places to foster Boulder's sense of place. (Historic Preservation Day/Week, Then and Now slideshows)
- (4) Utilize the website to provide clear and easily-accessible information regarding review processes, design guidelines and incentive programs.
- (4) Windows: open dialogue/listen to concerns
- (2) Send links to design guidelines and other information to architects, landscape architects, contractors, realtors and new owners of landmarked properties and those located in a historic district.
- (1) Establish neighborhood liaisons to strengthen communication and collaboration between property owners and the city. Liaisons may act as the point of contact ~~for~~ between the neighbors interested in learning about historic preservation ~~and the organization of community outreach events.~~ (i.e. informal coffee gatherings) (–include in trainings)(Listen/open dialogue)
- (1) Recognize projects that effectively integrate historic preservation and sustainability.

Program Operation

- (4) Establish a process to follow-up on Landmark Alteration Certificates to ensure compliance with the design guidelines and consistent enforcement policies.
- (2) Explore ways to make review processes more efficient (i.e., allowing increased administrative review of minor alterations) (Remove review requirement for small alterations, i.e. roofing, paint colors, etc)~~.~~
- (2) Add designation information to the County Assessor website
- (1) Assess and update design guidelines as needed; create a comprehensive template for future historic district design guidelines to ensure they are ~~comprehensive~~ complete and clarify that they are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- (1) Reassess the demolition ordinance's effectiveness in preserving significant buildings.
- (1) Consider adding a contractor certification program specific to work in Historic Districts (optional, would create a list of contractors with a demonstrated knowledge of the design guidelines and process).

Historic Preservation Plan Public Meeting
Wednesday, June 5, 2013
5:30 -- 7:00 p.m.
Chautauqua Community House

Attendees: 8 members of the public, 4 Landmarks Board Members and 4 staff members

Purpose
The purpose of the meeting was to gather feedback on the preliminary themes and recommendations of the plan. The meeting began with a brief overview of the work to date and the schedule moving forward. The group then reviewed provided feedback on the preliminary themes and recommendations. The Landmarks Board members were present to observe, and discussed the material at the following Landmarks Board meeting. At the end of the meeting, stickers were used to indicate the top 6 recommendations.

1) **Are these the correct themes?**
   The group generally agreed with the themes. It was suggested that Education and Community Collaboration be changed to "Community Engagement and Collaboration" . Clarification needed about the difference between themes and goals.

2) **Do you have specific comments on the preliminary recommendations?**

HISTORIC RESOURCE PROTECTION

- Identify and prioritize underrepresented resources to ensure the protection of Boulder's overall development patterns. This may include developing historic contexts and resurveying resources associated with African American and Hispanic history, and significant buildings of the recent past.
- Identify and prioritize the designation of city-owned buildings that are eligible for landmark designation (BVCP).
- Update existing survey records to ensure current eligibility assessments (BVCP).
- Resurvey areas where significant change has occurred, identified potential areas where survey has not occurred, areas particularly vulnerable to inappropriate development, and under-represented resources and areas of the city.
- [1] Use the updated survey information to identify and encourage the designation of significant resources and areas.
- [2] Develop additional historic context reports to better understand key themes related to Boulder's development (i.e. University of Colorado).
- Coordination between city and county to designated publicly-owned and eligible buildings (i.e. Haertling structures in the county).
- Explore smaller historic districts (Uni Hill- Commercial)

~~EDUCATION AND~~ COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

- Strengthen partnerships with Historic Boulder, Inc and other local organizations to foster historic preservation.
- Establish neighborhood liaisons to strengthen communication and collaboration between property owners and the city. Liaisons may act as the point of contact for neighbors interested in learning about historic preservation and the organization of community outreach events.
- Send design guidelines and other information to realtors and new owners of landmarked properties and those located in a historic district.
- Utilize the website to provide clear and easily-accessible information regarding review processes, design guidelines and incentive programs.
- Establish a "preservation roadshow" and other more informal forums in which Landmarks Board members and staff ~~host workshops~~ in historic districts to discuss common issues and highlight preservation successes. (Edit to emphasize community collaboration; i.e. coffee hosted by neighborhood liaisons)
- Staff should pay attention to what is happening on the ground.
- Collaborate/engage with homeowners
- Improve communication
- Clarify role of Historic Boulder and the Landmarks Board
- Raise profile positively of historic preservation (Historic Preservation Day or Week, bus tours)
- Strive to be a role model for historic preservation programs across the country;
- Provide information to realtors through lectures (i.e. Then and Now slideshow)
- Tell the stories of Boulder's past to raise interest and awareness within the community;
- Note: Goals and Objectives too similar to Recommendations

PROGRAM OPERATION IMPROVEMENTS?

- Add recommendation to reflect text in memo "Continually strive to improve responsiveness to emerging issues that reflect community values"
- Enhance board training expand initial orientation program for new members as well as pursue ongoing training opportunities.
- Revise applications and forms to be streamlined, clear and intuitive.
- ~~Regularly~~ A~~a~~ssess and update design guidelines as needed; create a template for future historic district design guidelines to ensure they are comprehensive~~.~~ (State that they are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, provide flexibility—listen to the neighborhood; address issues not anticipated).
- Reassess the demolition ordinance's effectiveness in preserving significant buildings.
- Explore innovative options for the recognition and protection of postwar buildings and neighborhoods.
- Consider creating an archeological program that identifies, designates, and protects historic and prehistoric archeological resources. (BVCP)
- Establish a process to follow-up on Landmark Alteration Certificates to ensure compliance with the design guidelines and consistent enforcement policies.

- Develop a disaster response plan for the historic preservation program.
- Explore ways to make reviews processes more efficient i.e. allowing increased administrative review of minor alterations.
- Support regular events (rather than just reactive activities), raise the profile of preservation.

INCENTIVES

- Publicize existing incentives. (BVCP)
- Consider initiating new financial (such as a low-interest grant or loan program) and honorary incentives.
- Evaluate the current Greenpoints program to ensure integration between the city's sustainability and historic preservation goals.
- Recognize projects that effectively integrate historic preservation and sustainability. (Move to engagement?)

3) What are the top recommendations that should be included in the plan?

Historic Resource Protection

- [2] Develop additional historic context reports to better understand key themes related to Boulder's development (i.e. University of Colorado).
- [1] Use the updated survey information to identify and encourage the designation of significant resources and areas.

Community Engagement and Collaboration

- [4] Utilize the website to provide clear and easily-accessible information regarding review processes, design guidelines and incentive programs.
- [3] Raise profile positively of historic preservation (Historic Preservation Day or Week, bus tours)
- [2] Strengthen partnerships with Historic Boulder, Inc and other local organizations to foster historic preservation.
- [2] Establish neighborhood liaisons to strengthen communication and collaboration between property owners and the city. Liaisons may act as the point of contact for neighbors interested in learning about historic preservation and the organization of community outreach events.
- [2] Clarify role of Historic Boulder and the Landmarks Board
- [2] Tell the stories of Boulder's past to raise interest and awareness within the community;
- [2] Note: Goals and Objectives too similar to Recommendations
- [1] Provide information to realtors through lectures (i.e. Then and Now slideshow)

Program Operation

- [4] Explore ways to make reviews processes more efficient i.e. allowing increased administrative review of minor alterations.

- ~~Regularly~~ A~~a~~ssess and update design guidelines as needed; create a template for future historic district design guidelines to ensure they are comprehensive~~.~~ (State that they are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, provide flexibility—listen to the neighborhood [4]; address issues not anticipated.
- [1] Enhance board training expand initial orientation program for new members as well as pursue ongoing training opportunities.
- Reassess the demolition ordinance's effectiveness in preserving significant buildings.
- [1] Explore innovative options for the recognition and protection of postwar buildings and neighborhoods.

Incentives

- [2] Evaluate the current Greenpoints program to ensure integration between the city's sustainability and historic preservation goals.
- [2] Recognize projects that effectively integrate historic preservation and sustainability. (Move to engagement?)

Historic Preservation Plan Public Meeting
Thursday, July 18, 2013
Municipal Building Lobby

Attendees: 5 members of the public, 5 Landmarks Board Members and 4 staff members

Purpose
The purpose of the meeting was to gather feedback on the draft Historic Preservation Plan. Attendees were encouraged to add comments to posters with the draft prioritization chart. Staff, board members an attendees engaged in informal discussions regarding the development of the plan. Input was recorded by hand followed up via email. Key comments included:

- Critical that the overarching goal of the program to be "Establish a shared community vision for historic resource protection." A proactive approach should be established by evaluating currently designated resources, assessing the types of unprotected resources, and prioritizing resources through a community process.
- The demolition process is difficult because there is no community agreement on what resources are most important to preserve. The intent of the ordinance is sometimes lost when the focus is on design review.
- The website should be improved in terms of content, format, and ease of navigation. The review processes should be clearly outlined to reduce confusion. Design guidelines for each of the historic districts should be prominently featured and easily accessible.
- Add information about metal casement windows—not all historic windows are the same.
- Universal Accessibility considerations should be highlighted in the plan—the program should be aligned with local, state and federal policies.
- Consider offering training workshops to demonstrate energy efficient upgrades that are sympathetic to the historic character of a building.

Historic Preservation Plan Landmarks Board Meeting
Thursday, July 18, 2013
City Council Chambers

The Landmarks Board provided feedback on the draft Historic Preservation Plan. Key comments included:

- Overall, the draft plan is very comprehensive and reflective of community feedback;
- Add as objective: "Cultivate and maintain relationships with already landmarked districts and landmarks;"
- Clarify how the plan will be used;
- Move "Explore designation of eligible smaller buildings" to Near-Term time frame;
- Move "Develop a disaster response plan…" to Near-Term time frame;
- Add reference to Greenpoints program in objective to align city policies;
- Remove recommendation to "Promote Compatible Design Solutions Suited to Postwar Homes." Item should be further vetted prior to inclusion in a long-term plan.

July 16, 2013

Dear Landmarks Board and City Staff,

Historic Boulder is pleased to review the July 3rd draft of the city's Historic Preservation Plan and provide preliminary comments. A lot of good work and thought has gone into the work thus far and we commend you for moving this important plan forward. This letter is to provide a few "big picture" comments on this latest draft in advance of your Board discussion this week.

We believe that two essential issues are missing from this draft of the plan:

1. **Shared community vision for resource protection-** One of the most important Preservation Plan goals that was listed in earlier drafts was to "establish a long-term vision and develop a proactive plan" for the preservation of Boulder's significant historic resources. That goal is not included in the July 3rd draft plan. Nor are action steps to implement that goal, yet we think these should be the most essential elements of a final plan.

   As noted in the draft plan, the city's program is nearly forty years old, and "a well-established and dynamic historic program that is cited as being a model in Colorado and nationwide." Yet the plan also notes that the program is largely reactionary. It says that nearly all the landmarks and historic districts have been in reaction to perceived threats. As a model historic preservation program, Historic Boulder believes that it is time for Boulder to become more visionary and proactive. An important first step would be to create a shared vision in the community for what resources are most in need of protection (and possibly, which ones are not). With this shared vision, more of the city's and community's time could be spent on education, developing incentives and strategies to protect the buildings and areas that have been identified as most significant, and less time reacting to things like demolition requests. Historic Boulder would be happy to partner with the city and the community to create the vision for what should be protected and develop strategies to get us there.

   Although the July 3rd draft plan lists "identifying and prioritizing resources and areas..." as an objective, Historic Boulder believes that this must include a shared community vision and agreed upon priorities to make any meaningful change. This will take a significant evaluation of what resources are currently protected, as well as an assessment of the type and nature of unprotected extant resources, and a planning and community outreach process to educate the community and prioritize needs. We feel this issue should be discussed in the plan, that the objective related to prioritizing resources and areas should be strengthened and put under a "shared vision" goal, and that specific action items should be listed in the plan to ensure its implementation.

2. **Demolition review for non-designated buildings -** In Historic Boulder's view, the second most important issue to be addressed in the plan is the review of demolition applications for non-designated buildings over 50 years of age. As we have stated previously, while the demolition ordinance is an important protection tool, it is clearly a difficult process for everyone involved and we would like to work with the city and community to find more proactive ways to save important resources in the future.

The draft plan suggests that the concern with the demo ordinance is in how demolition is defined, but we disagree. The reason for this definition is that removing certain portions of a building (e.g., a full street-

facing wall) destroys the integrity of a historically significant structure, resulting in its loss as a historic resource. The definition grew out of the de-facto demolition of significant resources that, for example, kept one wall standing as a way to get around the historic demo ordinance review. In our view, the more significant issues with the demo ordinance are that: a) the purpose of the ordinance sometimes gets lost, especially when it turns into a design review process, rather than a review for historic merit; and b) there is no community agreement on what resources are most important to preserve, making the process confusing and unpredictable for applicants and the community.

a) Need to Clarify the Purpose of Demo Review: Fundamentally, the purpose of the demo ordinance process is to determine whether the non-designated building being reviewed is of sufficient historic merit to be preserved, and if so, to allow time to seek alternatives to demolition. Then, if the building is historically significant and the community is willing to ensure its protection, it will be subject to adopted guidelines to ensure appropriate alterations in the long term. If it is not deemed to be of sufficient merit, or no alternatives to demolition can be found, or the community is not willing to ensure its protection, Historic Boulder believes that the owners should be able to make whatever changes they wish, so long as the changes meet all other city regulations. We believe that the only time that design review should be part of the demo process for non-designated buildings is when landmark designation is a possibility and the applicants want to understand the types of alterations that would be appropriate and in compliance with adopted design guidelines. As you know, in the past, these types of discussions have been useful and have sometimes led to consensual designations. Often as part of this process, applicants learn more about the historic and architectural values of their buildings, are surprised to find out that reasonable alterations to historic buildings are allowed, and decide to agree to landmark designation.

b) Need for Shared Vision on Priorities: The only way to ensure the long term protection of significant historic resources, of course, is to landmark them and be subject to adopted design guidelines. We recognize that the community is not willing to landmark every important building, especially when it is over an owner's objection. However, if the community had a shared vision and understanding of the highest priority resource protection needs as discussed in # 1, the city and preservation community could focus on strategies to preserve the buildings and places we all agree are most important to the community. Additionally, potential owners would understand the value of what they are purchasing and either decide to purchase them or not on this basis. Then important buildings might be less likely to be proposed for demolition. For those buildings that are proposed for demolition, the process would be more predictable, as there would be a clearer understanding up front about which buildings and areas were important and why.

We believe that the plan section on demolition of non-designated resources should be revised and the above issues included and addressed as goals and action items.

Thank you for considering these two important issues when you discuss the draft plan on July 18. Historic Boulder is happy to help draft revisions to address them, if desired. We plan to submit more detailed comments after we hear the results of your July 18 board discussion. Many thanks to you and to the staff for all you do for the Boulder community in the interests of historic preservation.

Sincerely,

Abby Daniels
Executive Director

August 13, 2013
City Council Dinner Discussion
Draft Historic Preservation Plan
DRAFT

City Council: Mayor Matt Applebaum, Suzy Ageton, KC Becker, Macon Cowles, Suzanne Jones, George Karakehian, Tim Plass, Ken Wilson

Staff: Jane Brautigam, City Manager; David Driskell, Executive Director Community Planning & Sustainability; Susan Richstone, Deputy Director Community Planning & Sustainability; Lesli Ellis, Comprehensive Planning Manager; James Hewat, Senior Historic Preservation Planner; Marcy Cameron, Historic Preservation Planner; Deb Kalish, Senior Assistant City Attorney

PURPOSE: The purpose of the discussion was to gather feedback on the Draft Historic Preservation Plan.

OVERVIEW OF THE PRESENTATION:
Staff presented an overview of the Draft Historic Preservation Plan. The City Council was asked for feedback.

COUNCIL FEEDBACK:

1. **Does the City Council have feedback on the Draft Historic Preservation Plan?**

Overall Comments
- It is a great idea to have a vision for the program and it is important to be proactive instead of reactive.
- It is important that the plan recommends improvements to the current program to increase clarity and predictability.

Historic Resource Protection
- Clarify what it means to "Foster Greater Awareness for Postwar Architecture;"
    - Greater community dialogue is needed to determine the value postwar neighborhoods and whether and how they might be preserved. The development of pattern books also needs to be discussed further and related to the broader discussion of potential zoning changes and the idea of walkable neighborhoods.
    - The opportunity to own a new, single-family house was an exciting prospect for many of the first occupants in postwar neighborhoods in Boulder. This sentiment should be carried through.
- It is important to clarify that fostering a more proactive program does not mean that properties and areas will be aggressively targeted for landmark designation.
- Encouraging the preservation of smaller houses a good idea, but outreach is needed to explain what designation entails;
- Existing incentives need to be publicized more broadly; many people are not aware they exist.

DRAFT

Community Engagement

- Community engagement and collaboration are an important aspect of the plan;
- Stories are the engaging part of preservation; continue to develop historic context reports;
- The integration of sustainability and historic preservation continues to be a point of apprehension for many; current treatment of this issue is lacking. More outreach is needed and current scholarship should be publicized.

Program Operation

- Recommendations to improve the consistency and predictability of the program strengthen the plan;
- A proactive approach is encouraged, but clarify what this means; avoid prescriptive designations, and do not send the message that the city will "go after" properties.

Implementation

- Each recommendation will require resources; leverage volunteers.
- It will be important to prioritize the items each year; all have costs.

DRAFT