

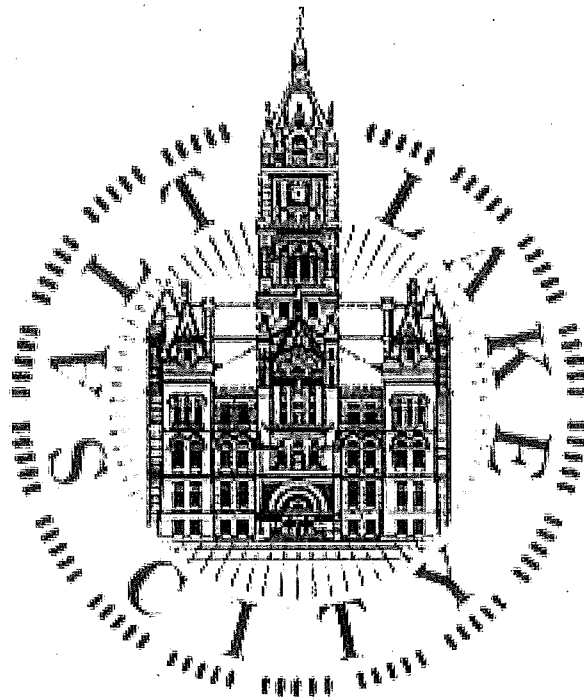
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Open City Hall Online Forum - Comments Received October 5 - 12

Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

The Salt Lake City Planning Division is reviewing a proposed local historic district designation of an area within the Yalecrest neighborhood. What is your opinion on the proposed designation?

Public Comments as of October 13, 2010, 7:35 AM



Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

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Introduction

The Salt Lake Planning Division welcomes you to this public forum regarding the proposed local historic district designation of an area within the Yalecrest neighborhood.

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As of October 13, 2010, 7:35 AM, this forum had:

Attendees:	170
Participants:	36
Hours of Public Comment:	1.8

As with any public comment process, participation in Open Salt Lake City Hall is voluntary. The statements in this record are not necessarily a representative sample of the whole population, nor do they reflect the opinions of any government agency or elected officials.

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All Statements

Jan Ellen Burton in Salt Lake City

October 12, 2010, 7:10 PM

I have been totally frustrated by comments relating to price decrease caused by historic district designation. There was an excellent description of 2 remodels in the Avenues by Jim Jenkins in the Avenues Community Council Newsletter. One house was done with an eye to historic compatibility and one was not. It is not difficult for me to see why the less historic compatible house tends to be on the market longer. When I came to SL in the 80s many houses in the Avenues needed work--More work than the typical Yalecrest house needs now.

Many people I have talked to who do not support historic designation have become afraid. Their fear relates to being told they cannot improve their house, to include putting on screens. This misinformation comes from individuals who have little notion of what a historic district can do to not only add character to a neighborhood, but add value and restored life as well.

Kim Childs in Salt Lake City

October 12, 2010, 6:05 PM

I STRONGLY SUPPORT the Local Historic Designation for the Yalecrest area.

The Yalecrest neighborhood is well known by people throughout Salt Lake and beyond for its character and charm. There are many different homes in the area with notable architectural styles, largely from the 1910's, 1920's and 1930's. I grew up in a 1925 Harvard Avenue home and now live in one on 900 South built in 1926. I like to walk around the entire Yalecrest area taking in the uniqueness of all of its charming homes.

It is disheartening to see the integrity of the original architectural styles being compromised and destroyed little by little. We have a unique treasure in the area and have an obligation to preserve it not only for ourselves, but also for future generations.

It is sad to see a stucco or siding covered addition plopped on top of what was once a uniquely delightful one-story home.

It has been demonstrated numerous times in various community meetings over the past couple months that while an LHD does indeed create some restrictions in what can be done to existing homes, those restrictions are not as severe as what many people seem to fear. It has also been demonstrated that LHD designation in other LHD designated areas, such as the Avenues, has been well received and an effective way to preserve the character of our city's treasured older neighborhoods as well as insure that property values do not decline.

Many opposed claim to dislike the idea of a layer of bureaucracy to approve improvements, yet they generally are opposed to demolitions and want to see the character of the neighborhood "preserved." Unless the LHD is set in place though, the character of the neighborhood will continue to be sadly whittled away because there are simply no adequate restrictions currently in place. It is not really practical or feasible to set up restrictions for just the Yalecrest area, other than the LHD, to address the problems.

Another problem not always addressed is the problem of developers or "flippers" coming in,

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Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

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All Statements

buying up properties, demolishing and/or making additions, and selling them for a profit. This has been occurring a disturbing amount of times over the past number of years. These "flippers" do not care about keeping up the character of the area despite what they may say. They are just looking to make a buck.

Those opposed to the LHD fear that improvements will not be allowed. This is NOT true. Improvements will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Improvements absolutely CAN be made that do not destroy the integrity of an "historic" Yalecrest house.

Semi-anonymous in Salt Lake City

October 12, 2010, 5:25 PM

I find it interesting the group opposed to the Yalecrest LHD call themselves "preservationists for property rights." To me, these two concepts seem to be opposing ideas.

Preservationists advocate protection of historic places, and the Yalecrest "preservationists for property rights" aren't talking about preserving our treasured homes at all. Actually, they don't ever bring up the topic. It's certainly not in their Google group discussions.

And as for property rights, real estate ownership does not necessarily equate with having ultimate authority. That would be a sovereignty, where each homeowner in Yalecrest could do anything he or she wants with their homes and land. Tear them down. Let them deteriorate to a hazardous situation. Built them five stories high or to the edge of their property line. Buy, sell, rent, expand, landscape, let weeds take over, decorate, improve, enhance, enlarge, bedazzle to their heart's content with no regard for their surroundings, the neighbors they live next to or the community they chose to live in. Sounds crazy, but that's why we have standards and limits.

The "preservationists for property rights" seem to believe that simply tightening up the current Yalecrest Compatible Infill Overlay by reducing the size of structures that can be built in our neighborhood is preservation. They also may think that voluntary education about nationally accepted historic design guidelines is preservation.

No, actually preventing the demolition of irreplaceable historic homes is preservation, as is averting the destruction of the historic exterior features of these homes. That's what the local historic district encompasses, and I support it.

The so-called "preservationists for property rights" aren't talking about preservation at all.

Craig DeMordaunt in Salt Lake City

October 12, 2010, 11:39 AM

I am writing in opposition of the proposed LHD designation.

An LHD is too restrictive for one story homes. They would not be able to expand up due to an LHD designation. Sure they might be able to expand in the back or side, but there is very little real estate available to expand in the rear for the smaller homes in the neighborhood. Therefore, smaller homes are frozen in time. This causes all sorts of problems in the neighborhood. Home prices will be affected because no opportunity for expansion.

www.PeakDemocracy.com/534

Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

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All Statements

Higher propensity for rental properties.

Adds hidden financial burdens to homeowners in updating and improving their homes.

Expanding families would look to move out of the neighborhood vs. stay.

No one wants out-of-scale homes. The infill overlay addresses size and scale of homes in the neighborhood. If it doesn't protect the neighborhood enough we should address the overlay not an LHD.

I believe we should not regulate character like an LHD does, rather we should provide guidelines for people to use. Peoples property rights are impacted when you regulate the character of their home.

Last, we need to work together as neighbors to come up with a better solutions than the LHD. The current proposal has caused unnessesary heated debates. If we could talk, educate each other, potentially in smaller groups we can reach common ground. It is worth the work.

Butch Adams in Salt Lake City

October 12, 2010, 10:43 AM

We oppose LHD designation for the current Yalecrest boundaries for reasons including:

- 1) The LHD designation adds financial barriers to updating and improving homes. This means that homes already in disrepair will continue to decline, hurting the neighborhood.
- 2) The LHD designation is too restrictive for small homes on small lots. People in large homes with spacious lots may still be able to add a second level, but homeowners of small homes on small lots will not be able to complete any remodels that change the exterior or roofline of the home, because the entire home is visible from the street.
- 3) The LHD designation is in direct opposition to sustainable building and living.
- 4) Many of the houses in Yalecrest do not "deserve" to be protected; they weren't appealing when they were built 50+ years ago, and they are only worse now.
- 5) The current boundaries of the Yalecrest neighborhood are absurd. Take a walk on 900 South from 1300 East to 1700 East, then take a walk on Yalecrest between 1300 East and 1700 East, and explain to us how 900 South can be placed into the same bucket with the same proposed restrictions as Yalecrest? 900 South and Sunnyside need to be removed from LHD consideration, regardless of how the rest of the neighborhood proceeds.
- 6) Most people agree that there are examples of poor, recent design in the neighborhood. No one wants more out-of-scale homes covered in stucco and faux stone. Even if LHD designation were the only way to prevent this kind of building, we would still be opposed to LHD because it cripples us and many of our neighbors. LHD strips us of our property rights, either by completely preventing tasteful second level additions or by placing the cost of remodeling out of reach. Besides, we don't believe the all-or-nothing rhetoric. Reject the LHD petition.

Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

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All Statements

Sincerely,
Butch Adams and Amy Davis
1658 East 900 South

Virginia Hylton in Salt Lake City

October 12, 2010, 8:06 AM

I am in favor of a LHD. Nearly every resident speaks of the character of our neighborhood as being what brought them here in the first place. Some go on however to disregard that charm in favor of their right to do whatever they want, regardless of the impact it has not only to the very character they cherish, but to their immediate neighbors and their quiet enjoyment including sunlight, privacy and personal space. A LHD is the only tool available to guide remodels and new development in the character of the neighborhood we now have. Historic Districts do not force out families or lower property values or create a neighborhood of rentals. Numerous national studies have shown that LHDs become desirable places to live with identity and pride and increased property values. Yalecrest is a premier example of a historic neighborhood and deserves the recognition and protection provided by a LHD designation.

Virginia Hylton

Roger Little in Salt Lake City

October 12, 2010, 7:12 AM

I would like to indicate my opposition to the LHD designation for the Yalecrest area. We need to look at alternatives and adjustments should be made, however this LHD proposal is far to broad. I would like to pursue adjustments to the existing Yalecrest overlay. A different approach can build unity rather than this LHD proposal which is promoting the current divisiveness within our great neighborhood.

Roger Little
1764 Laird Ave

Ken Strong in Salt Lake City

October 11, 2010, 9:40 PM

I would like to go on record AGAIN as being OPPOSED TO THE LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT IN THE YALECREST NEIGHBORHOOD. My name is Ken Strong. My wife and 3 kids have lived in the yalecrest community for over 4 years now. I am told my area has been carved out of the LHD as currently proposed, but based on the resiliency of this proverbial dead hores, I am not going to sit back and take my chances. I am fundamentally and principally opposed to the extra layer of beaurocracy created by a Local Historic District. I am opposed to the additional taxpayer costs, and the loss of personal discretion in the maintenance and improvement of my home. I do not relish the prospect of begging on my knees for permission to replace my freezing cold, and hideous looking wood windows, and ugly rain gutters (that are modern, and not historic). This would definitely not encourage happy feelings toward the city, nor my neighbors who would have put me in that position.

My home, and most of the other homes in the immediate vicinity, have little to no historical significance. They are tract homes of the post war era. They are not particularly attractive, nor architecturally significant. They do not deserve extraordinary efforts of preservation. I know that I speak for several of the young families in the area when I say that my wife and I

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Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

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All Statements

purchased our home with the intention of modifying it to meet our needs over time. We certainly did not buy our home for its small closets, its single pane windows, its lack of earthquake safety, or its historical significance. Instead, it is fair to say that we purchased our home for the surrounding trees, the great sense of community, and the layout of the neighborhood. We plan on raising our children in this home for many years to come, but this means that changes will need to be made to the home to accommodate our growing family. If the LHD passes, and my home is affected, my family will likely move rather than deal with the red tape of a remodel. I have a feeling we are not alone, and that not many young families would choose to live in a house that is "frozen in time". If the general concensus of the neighborhood will discourage progress and evolution of the neighborhood, then you will get just that, and the neighborhood will eventually grow old and die out. But if you want to preserve the feel of the neighborhood, and vibrant community, then my suggestion would be to abandon the death knell of the LHD.

Just to be clear, I do not support builders and homeowners who tear down existing properties only to build oversized houses with wanton disregard for the look and feel of the neighborhood. However, I feel that a Local Historic District drastically oversteps the bounds and scope of the problem, and unduly impedes the rights of homeowners in the neighborhood. In short, I would rather deal with a few distasteful remodels than give up my property rights.

To those avid supporters of LHD, I ask you: why would you so willingly give up property rights in a day and age when so many other rights are being taken from us by means beyond our control? This is an issue that is firmly within our control, and we ought to consider carefully the long term implications. So, I beg of you , as a resident of the potentially affected area, please **ABANDON FURTHER DISCUSSION OF A LOCAL HISTIRIC DISTRIC**. There are other solutions.

Thank you,
Ken Strong

Wilf Lieber in Salt Lake City
Dear SLC, Dear Neighbors,

October 11, 2010, 4:07 PM

We have lived in the proposed district for some 12 years now. We love living here, but are **ABSOLUTELY OPPOSED** to the proposed historic district.

We moved from a private lane to escape the unreasonable restrictions on our property required by the lane rules.

We have lived for many years in Europe where there are very old historic areas mixed with commercial and various design elements. We find such a mix, part of a progressive community.

Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

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All Statements

The effort to keep everything in a frozen state and also try to keep "other elements" out of the neighborhood is both arrogant and shameful.

Based on our difficult experience with the zoning and permit officials one month ago, we are convinced that the new historic area will cause nothing but aggravation. We tried to replace an ugly, modern sliding glass door in the back of our house with very attractive period type french door. We were denied a permit for "historic" reasons.

Please reconsider your efforts to turn our family friendly neighborhood into an arrogant place where every improvement or change will be denied by other neighbors and well-meaning city officials (who most likely have already built their out-of-character 2nd floors and additions.)

Thanks for listening to an opposing voice.

Perrine Anderson in Salt Lake City

October 11, 2010, 8:34 AM

I have lived just south of the proposed district and have watched multiple neighborhood "re-muddles" with dismay. I totally support this designation and only hope that my immediate area will be next!

Semi-anonymous in Salt Lake City

October 10, 2010, 8:10 PM

I have lived in the same house in Yalecrest for the last 20 years. Many would like you to believe that the divisiveness in the neighborhood is caused by the LHD but it started many years before the LHD was ever proposed. It started with the people who demolish 2,000 square foot homes and replace them with 6,000 plus square foot mansions. It started with the people who add a Draper style house on top of their Yalecrest house, the people who remodel their small cottage or Tudor into a grand mansion hugging the house to the very edges of the lot, the people who remodel their home way up without any regard for the neighbor on either side, or behind them or regard for taking away their privacy and light, the people who smother their homes with pink stucco. I have also seen many remodels that have been done very nicely but those remodels are not the problem – it is the demolitions, McMansions and the bad remodels that are causing the animosity for if none of this had ever happened in this neighborhood we wouldn't be where we are today.

The opponents of the LHD would like you to think that you won't be able to improve or remodel your home. This is not true – today I was in Capitol Hill a historic district for many years and saw a home that was being renovated and the windows had been replaced with new windows. I saw another home that was having space added on top – so it can be done. What can't be done with the LHD will be the blatant disregard for the neighbors around you. How can an infill ordinance control the character for beauty is in the eye of the holder.

Mayor Becker spoke at the Yalecrest Neighborhood Council on Oct 6th and he was right. This issue will never go away until a LHD is established for Yalecrest because without guidelines that the LHD will have it will be business as usual. I have seen what the opponents are proposing for the YCI amendment and it does nothing for demolitions or the preservation of the character of the home. So round and round it goes and the animosity continues because people

Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

The Salt Lake City Planning Division is reviewing a proposed local historic district designation of an area within the Yalecrest neighborhood. What is your opinion on the proposed designation?

All Statements

will continue on as they have – demolishing homes, destroying character by adding inappropriate remodels, turning their homes into Park City Mansion Wannabe's and taking every advantage they can.

Until people realize that this is an issue that is just not about ME but about a community of people where what one person does to their property affects the community as a whole the divisiveness and animosity will continue. The LHD is not the problem it is the answer to the problem.

I urge the city to follow their own preservation plan and preserve the treasure of Yalecrest and to listen to the Mayor. The LHD works!

Kelly White

Semi-anonymous in Salt Lake City

October 9, 2010, 5:28 PM

We have lived in the Yalecrest neighborhood for over 30 years and it has been disturbing to see how the teardowns and the oversized and out-of-scale additions have threatened our neighborhood's charm and character. Once the character of our neighborhood is altered significantly, there is no turning back, it is gone forever. Even with this current unfortunate trend, we believe that Yalecrest is still one of Salt Lake City's premier neighborhoods and represents a critical piece of the city's historical architecture. Several years ago, the Yalecrest neighborhood was recognized and honored by being placed on the National Historic Register. An overwhelming number of homes in our neighborhood, over 90%, were identified as "contributing structures". Without the immediate attention, Salt Lake City could lose forever the beauty and charm on this wonderful neighborhood. We cherish this community and believe that each one of us who lives here has the responsibility to see it preserved for generations to come. The YCI infill ordinance was a good preservation start, but it did not and cannot go far enough to stop demolitions and preserve Yalecrest's character and we know our feelings are shared by hundreds of others in this neighborhood and throughout the city. We strongly believe we have a neighborhood that is a unique Salt Lake City treasure, very much worthy of preservation. Oversized remodels and teardowns have already become dinosaurs in the progressive parts of the country and most of the world. Please let's hold on and save our neighborhood before it is too late. We strongly support a local historic district and urge you to do the same.

George and Cathy Kelner

Jon Dewey in Salt Lake City

October 9, 2010, 4:57 PM

Thank you to the Mayor for attending the Yalecrest Neighborhood Council meeting and making it clear that the Yalecrest Compatible Infill Ordinance cannot be amended to address demolitions and architectural character which contributes to the charm of the area. These are issues that the majority of residents on either side are concerned about.

Cost continues to be brought up. Because of Yalecrest's placement on the National Register of Historic Places (which the Neighborhood Council pursued on behalf of the entire neighborhood)

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Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

The Salt Lake City Planning Division is reviewing a proposed local historic district designation of an area within the Yalecrest neighborhood. What is your opinion on the proposed designation?

All Statements

individuals in the Yalecrest neighborhood are able to apply for and receive a 20% tax credit on appropriate and approved remodels. That is a tremendous benefit that makes a remodel less costly and meets standards that maintain character. This is a state program and if plans are approved for the credits the remodel is likely in compliance with local guidelines, though they are two different programs and reviewed as such. I have been through and approved by both processes and happy to talk to anyone about it.

On March 17, 2010 the HLC voted unanimously to let Yalecrest move forward in the process, it recognized the value this neighborhood holds and the criteria met. This process is being respected and is continuing.

The proposed workgroups could get together and talk, but in the end, again, the only tool available to address character and demolitions and being offered to the neighborhood is the Local Historic District. After the district is adopted there are specific guidelines that can be crafted specifically for Yalecrest.

The Local Historic District designation not only provides assurances to neighbors who worry each time a house sells right next to them but provides flexibility to individual home owners in their addition plans while maintaining the original character and charm that is valued.

I support the LHD designation because it is the appropriate tool to protect the Yalecrest neighborhood and its residents.

Jon Dewey
1724 E. Princeton Ave

Boyd Anderson in Salt Lake City
October 8, 2010

October 9, 2010, 9:50 AM

I've lived in the Yalecrest area for 17 years. I am writing to strengthen the voice against, and ask that you do not support, the proposed Yalecrest Historic District.

I've collected a few statements from notable economists and council members across the country with experiences related to what we are going through today.

“What makes a community suitable is its systematic embrace of principles that make self-directed individual life possible in a social context. That means a community which pervasively respects and safeguards individual rights; that is, the ability of each sovereign individual to pursue his own life and goals without arbitrary coercive hindrance from others... if your rights can be repealed whenever a bunch of neighbors decides they should be repealed, you obviously have no rights at all. And that is not a good social setting in which to attempt to live one's life. If we are really worried about the interests of the community as a whole, then we should be concerned about the rights of all its constituents. That means we should be concerned to uphold the property rights of every individual in that community.”

- Tibor Machan, Ph.D. The George L. Argyros School of Business and Economics, Chapman

www.PeakDemocracy.com/534

Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

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All Statements

University

In December 2000 the Owosso, Michigan, City Council passed a Historic District ordinance by a 6-1 vote. The more they learned about the new ordinance, the more local residents became angry. "We own the property, pay the taxes on it, and incur the expense of keeping it up" said former councilman Burton Fox, "why should it suddenly be up to a committee to determine what changes we may or may not make to our homes?"

The result: Owosso residents voted to repeal the historic district ordinance just eight months later.

As a homeowner and resident of the 1700 block of Hubbard Avenue, home to the infamous "Garage-Mahal", I have witnessed attempts by well-meaning but over-reaching members of our neighborhood to reduce the inherent property rights each and every homeowner in the area acquired when purchasing their properties. These attempts seem to escalate each year. After attendance of one of the earliest meeting of this group over 12 years ago, I left disgusted that the neighbors believed they had rights and, even more astounding, the qualifications to impose their view of "good taste" and "appropriateness", particularly on a well-established, successful neighborhood. I understand their intentions, but consider them illegal and naïve. They simply DO NOT have the authority to change my property rights.

- Why should a group of overzealous neighbors be allowed to impose a restriction wherein "any alteration to the exterior of a residential structure or accessory structure is prohibited"?

- What exactly constitutes authority on "good taste" and qualifications to issues "Certificates of Appropriateness" for replacing my roof, gate, windows, fence, etc.?

Last summer several neighbors were helping move a children's playhouse in a backyard when someone jokingly asked whether or not the homeowner had obtained a Certificate of Appropriateness for the playhouse. To my astonishment, we learned that the vigilante enforcement team had indeed visited this house to make sure that no changes were being made to the property without their approval! Other homeowners in the same group had also been visited when constructing a playhouse. This nosy and intrusive behavior by the unofficial code enforcement team certainly does not enhance the feel of the neighborhood!

I would like to see an end to the vigilante code enforcement being done by people who are not employed to do so. These people trespass on every construction project with their tape measures and cameras costing owners thousands of dollars in unnecessary delays and additional expenses incurred with their architects and engineers.

James D. Saltzman, English Teacher at St. John's School in Houston and Volunteer Policy Analyst for the Houston Property Rights Association stated:

"The arguments for historic preservation rules falsely presume that politicians are better qualified to manage property than are the individuals who actually own the properties.

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Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

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All Statements

Replacing the choices of the property owner with the edicts of the historical commission is bad for property values and it is also censorship. The government has no more business imposing their ideas of good taste on our homes than it does on our clothes or our cars.”

If you believe in the inherent freedoms of this country, particularly property rights - the soul of our liberties, how can you argue with this statement? Anything otherwise is a recipe for corruption and opens the door for more collusion within the system.

It is further important to note, that the Historic District rules are so strict that they actually discourage the maintenance and restoration of older properties. Certain safety and previously affordable minor improvements would be subject to an expensive and time-consuming approval process. Replacing a wooden fence, should not require 3 sets of architectural drawings, 2 committee reviews and 6 months of planning. Also, some homes in the area truly need to be replaced rather than remodeled. Remember, the commission will be under no obligation to advise or assist property owners. The burden is on the owner to prove that any proposed improvement is historically accurate, even when no historic evidence exists. Decisions in this environment can be arbitrary, arrogant, and possibly even vindictive.

A guaranteed result of the proposed rules would be a shift of value from the newly restricted neighborhoods to adjacent neighborhoods not subject to the red tape.

The Summer 1991 issue of the Journal of the American Planning Association reviewed the impact of local historic designation on property values around the country in the 1970s and 1980s. One example in the study shows that several blocks in Galveston's Strand historic district experienced an annual growth rate of only about 11 percent from 1974 to 1977, although city values overall rose by 28 percent per year. Another looked at five Washington, D.C., neighborhoods where the rate of increase in property values actually slowed after the imposition of local historic controls. It is very clear that property does not become more valuable when government control over it increases.

Successful preservation can and does occur voluntarily. Many good homes are restored, not torn down, and most all of the new construction is architecturally compatible with the old, all without input from a government commission.

“One very powerful tool for preservation that those who push for more regulation seem to forget about is this: If they want to see a home preserved, they can band together and buy it. Honest people do it all the time; dishonest people hire politicians to do their dirty work for them. Let's remember that like certain homes, the time-honored principles of limited government, individual liberty, and private property rights are also of historic significance and are worth preserving. Those noble values are compromised when pushy preservationists choose action forced by government over voluntary action.”

- Lawrence W. Reed, President of the Foundation for Economic Education (FEE), Irvington-on-Hudson, New York

Please understand that this is not a zero sum game. If someone improves their property by

www.PeakDemocracy.com/534

Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

The Salt Lake City Planning Division is reviewing a proposed local historic district designation of an area within the Yalecrest neighborhood. What is your opinion on the proposed designation?

All Statements

remodeling or tearing it down and replacing it, someone else did not lose property. They did not own it in the first place so they can't lose it. More importantly, the neighborhood will have experienced the added value of the improved property. More value was created. We are all better off when our neighbors improve their property and we are worse off when maintenance and improvements are deferred because owners cannot deal with the red tape.

John Stossel recently said, "Something's happened to America, and it isn't good. It's become easier to get into trouble. We've become a nation of a million rules... imposed, top-down rules formed in the brains of meddling bureaucrats who think they know better than we how to manage our lives."

James Madison remarked (not quite so recently), "Government is instituted to protect property of every sort." And, "This being the end of government, that alone is a just government, which impartially secures to every man, whatever is his own."

Finally, as City Councilman Mark Owen of Owosso, Michigan exclaimed, "Keep your cotton-pickin' fingers off our history and our property. Restoration and preservation are possible only when individuals put their own money, blood, sweat, and tears behind their passion for history and/or their desire to boost the value of what they own. The best defense against erosion of historic value is the very personal, bottom-line interests of the property owners themselves."

Please do not impose the historic district on our neighborhood. Over 70% of owners in this area DO NOT want it. It will lead to decrease in value of our homes, and will remove the inherent freedoms each homeowner rightfully acquired when purchasing in this beautiful area. Please stop this from being approved.

Boyd W. Anderson
1759 Hubbard Avenue
Salt Lake City, Utah 84108

Kelly Marinar in Salt Lake City

October 8, 2010, 9:50 PM

The problems we've seen in Yalecrest regarding "character and style" are one of the main reasons we are here today. It has caused animosity in our neighborhood LONG BEFORE the HLC offered us the chance to create a YLHD (March 17, 2010).

It's great that both sides of the YLHD debate want to see "character and style" preserved within Yalecrest. We agree!!
But how?

1. YPPR supporters: "Voluntary and non binding education and review of plans prior to

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Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

The Salt Lake City Planning Division is reviewing a proposed local historic district designation of an area within the Yalecrest neighborhood. What is your opinion on the proposed designation?

All Statements

building. The measures allow participation from the neighborhood..."

2. YLHD supporters: Create a YLHD and take advantage of the HLC's expertise.

I'm in the YLHD camp. It makes the most sense. I don't want to be the one to tell my neighbor, "No, you can't do that! It doesn't fit in!" I don't want to create hard feelings for either of us. I have no desire to play the bad guy/cop and I don't want any of us to feel forced to do that. The HLC is perfect for this role. They have the information to help guide and advise applicants. They have more expertise than the neighbors on my block (no offense). The LHD tool is already in place and it works. Plus, the city is continually trying to improve their Design Guidelines and Processes. I listened in on a discussion between Planning and HLC about improving the guidelines. The information exchange was positive. Also, this year SLC received an award for their electronic plan submittal program (Projectdox). Our city employees are doing great work.

I can't see a good compromise between these two approaches. I don't want to spend more time and money to create a new hybrid tool. I seriously doubt if the rest of the city wants to pay for a special Yalecrest tool! Think about it. One thing I can imagine is Yalecrest residents helping to improve the LHD tool. The city welcomes our input.

Over the years, we have seen plenty of recommendations for creating a YLHD: the Reconnaissance Level Survey, the Preservation Plan analysis, the Eastbench Master Plan... not to mention countless individuals within and outside of Yalecrest. Yet, we never move forward. It's been 20 long years since the last LHD was created in SLC and now, finally, we have OUR opportunity. We so deserve this honor. Let's work together and go for it!

Kelly Marinan
1766 Harvard

Semi-anonymous in Salt Lake City

October 8, 2010, 8:43 PM

I feel Salt Lake City owes the residents of the Yalecrest area the time to discuss this issue among our individual neighborhoods, as was recommended by the City Council. The Yalecrest Yes organization clearly does not want these discussions to take place. They have made no effort to heal the tensions in our community, in fact, their petition only exacerbates the negative feelings that exist because of the initial petition. A review of the Yalecrest Yes website is a lesson in propaganda and spin, blending partial truths with misleading statements, and I feel that anytime an organization has to spin the truth it is because the full truth will not be acceptable to the public. That Yalecrest Yes chose to file this petition at a time when our neighborhood is so divided shows a lack of sensitivity and concern for the people that make this area a great place in which to live. I urge Salt Lake City to dismiss this petition and allow that the discussions we were requested to have a peaceful forum in which to take place.

Jan Hemming in Salt Lake City

October 8, 2010, 4:41 PM

www.PeakDemocracy.com/534

Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

The Salt Lake City Planning Division is reviewing a proposed local historic district designation of an area within the Yalecrest neighborhood. What is your opinion on the proposed designation?

All Statements

Seventy-three percent of those in the neighborhood responding to online polls, petitions or comment cards – have said they want the Local Historic District. Yalecrest Yes has the names and signatures to back up this claim.

We have taken our information from every available public source – Councilman JT Martin’s “dot map,” comment cards signed by Yalecrest resident, online dialogue, and signatures gathered on petitions circulated throughout the neighborhood by Yalecrest Yes. To our knowledge, everyone who has stated their opinion has been counted in our poll.

There is a vast silent majority of residents who want the Local Historic District. When I walked the neighborhood seeking signatures for petitions in favor of the LHD, many of those who signed were elderly. Others don’t use computers. Some were on vacation when the public neighborhood meetings were held this summer or had young children at home and couldn’t attend those forums. These opinions count just as much as the loud voices who attended public neighborhood meetings.

The regulations which would create a Local Historic District do not require that a certain percentage of the residents support the designation. The only determining factor is whether or not the area in question meets historical preservation guidelines – and Yalecrest does by a significant margin –91% of the homes.

Yalecrest is a community of great historical importance to this city and to this state. And deserves Local Historic District Designation.

Jan Hemming
Salt Lake City

Mikel Covey in Salt Lake City

October 8, 2010, 2:15 PM

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for a local historic district designation for the irreplaceable Yalecrest area of Salt Lake City.

My wife and I were the initiators of what became the successful bid for historic district designation for our neighborhood, Westmoreland Place. Last December, I wrote the first letter to the Historic Landmark Commission expressing our neighborhood's interest in such designation after we did some preliminary polling of families in the area. A few months later, a small committee had formed around the idea with the addition of Jean Zancanella and Matt Durham.

When we first proposed an historic district, we didn't experience anywhere near the acrimony (by an extremely strident and organized minority) that has been the case in Yalecrest. Why? I think our neighbors agreed that, far from taking away property rights, an historic district actually bestows several new ones; notably, that when someone moves into such a protected area they can count on the fact that the valuable historic charm that they paid for will remain undiminished. Many of us consider that a property right worth having.

Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

The Salt Lake City Planning Division is reviewing a proposed local historic district designation of an area within the Yalecrest neighborhood. What is your opinion on the proposed designation?

All Statements

Please help give those same rights to the residents of Yalecrest and save this important city asset for this and all the generations to come.

In an historic sense, residents of a neighborhood are always temporary but the changes they bring to a place are permanent.

Sincerely,

Mikel Covey

Traci O'Very Covey

Semi-anonymous in Salt Lake City

October 8, 2010, 12:45 PM

I grew up in the Salt Lake Valley. The Yalecrest and Harvard/Yale neighborhoods have always been the models of permanence, beauty and stability. Eleven years ago we were fortunate enough to purchase a home here and share in a neighborhood ambiance I had never before experienced. While we are the third owners of our home, which was built in the early 30's, I view my presence here less in terms of "ownership" but more as a "stewardship."

I have a responsibility to those who came before and those who will come after to preserve, not just my home, but the entire fabric of our neighborhood. It is for that reason that I favor the LHD designation for Yalecrest.

Teardowns are a problem. When preserving a valuable tapestry, no one would replace a blue yarn with a yellow one, or a fine thread with a thick one. But that is, in effect, exactly what happens with teardowns. The 2,200 sq ft home is demolished and replaced with a 6,000 sq ft house and another thread of our tapestry is lost.

I have a responsibility to my neighbors and my community to not steal the value of the bargain they expected when they purchased their homes by keeping my facades intact when I make needed changes.

I don't adhere to a belief that my right of owning personal property creates unlimited freedom on its use or its care. I may own a car, but that doesn't entitle me to drive down the sidewalk. While I'm always free to sell it, I can't allow it to become a public nuisance. I can't trade it for a 60 ft tractor trailer and store it in front of my house. Ownership has always had its limits.

The neighborhood where I live is experiencing a "death by 1,000 cuts". A façade is lost here, an entire building there. And there. And there.

As individuals remove thread after thread from our tapestry, the rich tones will inevitably fade and the picture will eventually be unrecognizable.

It is the council's responsibility to exercise its leadership and prevent that tragic loss.

www.PeakDemocracy.com/534

Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

The Salt Lake City Planning Division is reviewing a proposed local historic district designation of an area within the Yalecrest neighborhood. What is your opinion on the proposed designation?

All Statements

Norbert Bensch

1754 Princeton

Renee Fitzpatrick in Salt Lake City
October 8, 2010

October 8, 2010, 11:00 AM

To Whom it May Concern:

I have lived in or near the Yalecrest area for most of my life. There is a primary reason that people want to live there, aside from the relative safety and proximity to the University: Most of the houses retain their original architecture and quality materials.

The growing number of remodeled and replacement houses that use fake materials, have "Hollywood" facades, huge additions and footprints make the area less appealing and desirable because they violate principles of good design.

As a member of the art and architecture community, a neighbor, and a concerned citizen, I am very much in favor of the LHD. This designation does not infringe on the rights of homeowners. On the contrary, it keeps their investment intact. The area was developed with architectural integrity in mind, and this integrity should remain.

Thank you,

Renee Fitzpatrick

Semi-anonymous in Bountiful

October 8, 2010, 12:23 AM

I am a disinterested 3rd party. I live in Davis County. I do however have friends in Sugarhouse south of the Yalecrest neighborhood. We drive and ride bikes through that neighborhood often to access the university and other areas. I am taken with the beauty and charm of the neighborhood, but have seen some obvious distractions from it with recent (last 10 yrs.) renovations of certain homes. It is noticeable and it isn't in the character of the neighborhood. Keep what you have, it IS noticed by others.

Semi-anonymous in Salt Lake City

October 7, 2010, 1:53 PM

As an urban planner by profession I believe that it is vital that we protect our historical neighborhoods from the bland suburban style development and architecture that has become

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Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

The Salt Lake City Planning Division is reviewing a proposed local historic district designation of an area within the Yalecrest neighborhood. What is your opinion on the proposed designation?

All Statements

synonymous with the "tear down re-build" invasion. A historic district designation is an important piece of the solution. The trick is to properly balance the rights of homeowners to maintain and update their existing homes without unduly burdening the homeowner. I agree that much of the pure historical significance of the structures has been obliterated as many of the homes in the area have over many years been converted to duplexes and tri-plexes, many without building permits and in violation of zoning.

We need in addition to a historic overlay, a requirement that these multi-family homes be owner occupied in at least one of the units, otherwise with no interest in the neighborhood they truly will turn into run down rental units. We also need to encourage more owner/occupants to purchase homes in this area so that they will have a personal connection and desire to keep their home in good repair. Clamping down too tightly on simple things like replacement windows and the installation of modern mechanical systems, exterior colors, or energy efficiency upgrades will discourage these potential purchasers.

As a former resident of the area, and current resident of Salt Lake City, I believe that it is time to protect the area from the further intrusion of incompatible development and architecture. If do not, we will continue to gradually loose the "soul" of our city and become increasingly assimilated into the current suburban architecture of "anywhere USA" and "places not worth caring about".

John Guynn in Salt Lake City
John Guynn

October 6, 2010, 6:33 PM

I am very much in favor of preserving all that is good and great about the wonderful architecture in our neighborhood. After thinking extensively on this issue and riding around the neighborhood on my motor scooter taking a very close look at the variability existant in the homes, I have concluded that LHD is not an appropriate solution for the entirety of the neighborhood, though fragments of the neighborhood might benefit from LHD designation.

The parts that in my opinion will not benefit from LHD designation are the very homes that need the most attention and are currently the most blighted. Such homes typically sit on the smallest lots and do not have sufficient value to remodel unless the owner can increase the square footage of the house (which in many cases would require building into the attic and therefore adding a second story).

Let's face it. People do not live the same way they did in 1930 when many of the smallest homes in the area were built. If we were required to live like we did back then, we would only drive 1 car and it would be a model A. But the world moves on and people's needs change.

What contributes most to a vibrant neighborhood are homeowners with a desire to buy and stay for a long time, typically to raise a family (or not). The tumbledown houses in our neighborhood that are in most need of repair are that way because the owners can't afford costly repairs. Often, people only remodel after saving money for some years. It is proven by extensive evidence, and admitted by those who support LHD designation, that remodeling will

www.PeakDemocracy.com/534

Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

The Salt Lake City Planning Division is reviewing a proposed local historic district designation of an area within the Yalecrest neighborhood. What is your opinion on the proposed designation?

All Statements

become substantially more expensive and difficult under a LHD. That will only exacerbate the problems inherent in the most rundown parts of the neighborhood. It is my fear that, instead of saving their pennies to someday remodel, many owners will simply sell out to a slumlord or become one themselves, thereby condemning large swaths of the neighborhood to perpetual rental unit hell.

And just like the racial "block busting" of decades past, which decimated entire middle class neighborhoods all over the nation, particularly in the older neighborhoods of the east and midwest, rental unit "block busting" might cause a similar result here. Think about it. If my neighbors on both sides or across the street let their houses go to pot because LHD makes it too expensive to remodel, then what incentive will I have to expend considerable resources remodeling (especially since remodeling will become even more expensive than it is now and my options for improving the house will be severely curtailed)? I would simply be overbuilt for the neighborhood and therefore I would not remodel either. To do so would be irrational, and people on tight budgets act according to their pocketbooks, especially in tough economic times such as this. I fear that a trend toward blight will spread throughout the most rundown parts of the neighborhood if the city adopts LHD designation for the entirety of Yalecrest.

In conclusion. There are many segments of the Yalecrest community that are in pristine condition and might benefit from LHD designation. However, there are large parts that will only suffer from LHD designation, to the grave detriment of the entire neighborhood. In short, I believe it is unwise to bring out a bazooka to stop a petty thief when a night stick will do. The reaction must fit the situation. LHD designation is an extreme reaction, a very inflexible approach to preservation, and only fits fragments of Yalecrest.

Todd Tanner in Salt Lake City

October 6, 2010, 3:58 PM

The LHD issue has created passionate debate and fostered ill will within our diverse neighborhood. I have neighbors who are now building homes in Millcreek and Holladay as a direct result of this unwelcome and contentious issue. Every meeting I attended had the majority of participants, and they were in the hundreds, soundly rejecting the LHD designation. The question over which side is silent majority or vocal minority only clouds the question at hand, which is, what do we have to do to put a stake in this zombie ordinance? I care deeply for my neighbors who look to the LHD as some panacea but I am not convinced that their desire to regulate me, my home and my neighborhood is for the greater good.

James Ashworth in Salt Lake City

October 6, 2010, 3:44 PM

I am a homeowner at 1376 Michigan Ave and I am opposed to my neighborhood being designated as a Local Historic District. I do support efforts that some of my neighbors have made in attempting to work towards a compromise that will allow for renovation and remodeling while maintaining the characteristics and spirit of the neighborhood. I am writing to ensure that my voice is heard.

My concerns include

1) I want to be able to always have the option to thoughtfully, tastefully and with sensitivity to

www.PeakDemocracy.com/534

Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

The Salt Lake City Planning Division is reviewing a proposed local historic district designation of an area within the Yalecrest neighborhood. What is your opinion on the proposed designation?

All Statements

the neighborhood as a whole, modify my home to better accommodate my and my family's needs. I believe this should include the option to tear down my current home and put in a new home that would be safer and more efficient, while continuing to look as though it belonged in the neighborhood. For me, this includes tearing down and rebuilding for maximum seismic protection. We live very close to the Wasatch Fault and the next earthquake is when, not if.

2) I believe that a high percentage of the homes in the neighborhood have been modified to some degree already, and I question the idea that the neighborhood is truly "historic". I am more interested in preserving the historic feel of the neighborhood without what I believe to be the excessive rigidity of a true LHD. I believe the homes in the neighborhood should have the flexibility to adapt to their current owner's needs and also adapt to technological advances. I recently read about the development of a plastic solar panel which catches 96% of incident light and looks "hairy". What if in a few years one could cover one's roof with something like that and power ones home? It may not look Historic, but I believe it would be such a positive thing to do for the environment it should be done. I doubt the philosophy and regulations of the LHD would encourage or allow such a thing.

Sincerely

James C. Ashworth

Michael Jones in Salt Lake City

October 6, 2010, 11:46 AM

I'm strongly in favor of LHD overlay designation for the Yalecrest neighborhood, and my position is set out in my detailed letter to the City of September 28, 2010. There, I review the provisions of the Salt Lake City Zoning Ordinance which, given the 91% "contributing" structures in the neighborhood, make it the DUTY of the City to overlay the LHD designation on the neighborhood.

The designation would apply a review process concerning scale and form. The process has worked well for the Avenues for two decades, and has worked across the country. It is simply not the bogey man that alarmist developers and a few citizens make it out to be. Rather, as in the Avenues, it will preserve and protect the historic fabric of the neighborhood from those who are insensitive to that fabric and otherwise unwilling to be bothered to preserve and protect it.

Alan Hayes in Salt Lake City

October 6, 2010, 10:35 AM

I am opposed to a local historic district in the Yalecrest area. We went through all this during the summer and it was found that the proposal was unfair to the residents that have not completed their renovations and needlessly restrictive. Nothing has changed since then.

Not everything that is old is historic, while there may be some noteworthy homes in the area that deserve to be labeled historic, many are tract homes of no particular distinction. They are not particularly well built, many are structurally unsound, and almost all are extremely energy inefficient. If residents are not allowed to replace these with modern homes that are earthquake resistant, energy efficient and large enough for a family, the area will become rental housing for students which will certainly ruin the "charm and character" of the area that proponents of the

www.PeakDemocracy.com/534

Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

The Salt Lake City Planning Division is reviewing a proposed local historic district designation of an area within the Yalecrest neighborhood. What is your opinion on the proposed designation?

All Statements

LHD claim to care about.

At the conclusion of this summer's meetings we were promised that going forward, there would be small block by block meetings to discuss what we would like done on a street by street basis. Instead you have come back with the same proposal for the same area. I hope that this summer's decision will be reaffirmed and that we can end this once and for all.

Alan Hayes
1432 Gilmer Dr

Ray Morrison in Salt Lake City

October 5, 2010, 9:15 PM

I'm confused. If Yalecrest Yes doesn't consider this as a referendum then why does it refer to itself as the "Silent Majority" and the rest of us as the "very vocal minority"?

Which side is the "silent majority" or which side is the "very vocal minority" may be debatable.

What isn't debatable:

The LHD issue (and perhaps the way it has been presented) has divided a neighborhood renowned for its diversity and inclusiveness.

A very substantial number of residents (whether a majority or not) oppose LHD.

LHD designation is very restrictive, costly for residents and an added economic burden to the City and its taxpayers.

Anyone not sick of this issue must get some sort of perverse pleasure from contention.

.....

Anything other than an immediate denial of Yalecrest Yes's current petition would undermine the efforts of the considerate portion of this neighborhood who want to address the concerns of all the residents in a fair, respectful and inclusive way. Our neighborhood needs and deserves a chance to address legitimate concerns without being besieged by yet another assault by LHD forces.

Concern for the neighborhood should be demonstrated by fostering collective discussion, not by the polarizing proposition of 'LHD or nothing'.

'LHD or nothing' is a false choice foisted upon us by Yalecrest Yes.

Adam Shaw in Salt Lake City

October 5, 2010, 9:00 PM

I am not in favor of the LHD. Please look back at the process that has brought us to this point to see that there is not widespread support for this idea from our neighborhood. The open process that was used last spring did not result in widespread support for the LHD; why should a less-

Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

The Salt Lake City Planning Division is reviewing a proposed local historic district designation of an area within the Yalecrest neighborhood. What is your opinion on the proposed designation?

All Statements

open and rushed attempt result in a different outcome? Please, let the City Council and HLC get on to other business.

This attempt by Yalecrest Yes is desperate at best and underhanded at worst, an attempt to wear down the voices of reason who seek compromise in preserving our wonderful neighborhood. Yalecrest, "yes" let's look at amending the Yalecrest infill ordinance, let's get all the voices on-board who seek to battle the out of scale homes and demolitions. Don't let the Yalecrest home and the Garage Mahal define the debate. These outliers do not represent the integrity and concern the overwhelming majority of us have for the neighborhood. No to the LHD, Yes to working for a solution that works for all voices in the debate.

Thank you.

Janine Sheldon in Salt Lake City

October 5, 2010, 8:41 PM

Again, I'm in favor of the LHD designation for Yalecrest. We need to be concerned about EVERYBODY'S property values. That means we must consider the effects of our tear-downs and inappropriate remodels on EVERYBODY and on our Salt Lake community as a whole. If we can't be considerate neighbors of our own accord (this has been proven by disasters like the Garage Mahal and too many others), we need processes moderated by professionals to help us. Many of the neighbors don't seem to understand that this ISN'T a referendum. It's a time-honored process that works to preserve and protect thousands of lovely neighborhoods across the country. Why do Utahns imagine they have to reinvent the wheel? Why do developers, salespeople, and landlords get to speculate at the expense of individual owners who actually put down roots in the neighborhood? Let's look towards the future and past our own property lines.

Martin Cuma in Salt Lake City

October 5, 2010, 8:33 PM

I live in the area and I OPPOSE the LHD but would be for a good local zoning change (though unlike the one from last summer which defined 50% of roof removal as demolition). I would also appreciate if Yalecrest Yes stopped wasting taxpayers money in form of time spent by the city officials reviewing their requests. I would much rather see this money spent on new bike lanes in the city or on the extension of the Parley's Trail (which looks like is still good 5 years away from being finished).

Semi-anonymous in Salt Lake City

October 5, 2010, 5:33 PM

NO to the LHD and NO to any further restrictions.

Homeowner on Michigan Ave

Robert Lindsley in Salt Lake City

October 5, 2010, 4:48 PM

Greetings:

As residents of the Yalecrest neighborhood, my wife and I would like to challenge several of the assertions that Yalecrest Yes presents:

www.PeakDemocracy.com/534

Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

The Salt Lake City Planning Division is reviewing a proposed local historic district designation of an area within the Yalecrest neighborhood. What is your opinion on the proposed designation?

All Statements

1. They claim more than 70% support from the area, yet their "survey" avoided any residence that was marked by the City Council as being against the local historic designation last summer. What this shows is that they found an additional 3 in 10 residents opposed, not including the hundreds who had voiced a negative opinion earlier.
2. One YY presenter last Tuesday at the Planning Commission's public meeting declared they represented a "silent majority," Richard Nixon's deceptive tactic of co-opting proxies from everyone who had not expressed an opinion. There are many who have not stated an opinion, but to presume to know their mind is absurd.
3. Another speaker last Tuesday stated that in existing LHD neighborhoods, a very low number (16%) of building permits applied for were referred to HLC for review. That is certainly understandable, since today it costs nearly \$1,500 to apply for a residential building permit. No one wants to waste money submitting something not in keeping with the historic guidelines, irrespective of how limiting they are. What may be more surprising is that one in six applicants was reviewed by HLC in spite of their desire to comply with the guidelines, which so many find both confusing and oppressive. This statistic is meaningless.

I hope all entities involved in this process will work with the majority of Yalecrest residents who attended the many meetings this summer, who want preservation and a limit to oversized homes and tear-downs of viable historic structures, BUT OPPOSE LHD. Yalecrest Yes claims the current infill ordinance won't work and can't be amended. There may be heavy lifting needed, but surely there is a middle position between LHD and nothing. Please deflect the all or nothing positions and initiate a study to find common ground.

Thank-you for your time.

Bob and Nancy Lindsley
1086 Military Drive
SLC 84105

Shelly Roalstad in Salt Lake City

October 5, 2010, 4:43 PM

I do not support the proposed Yalecrest LHD and, in particular, would like to see Sunnyside Ave. excluded from the LHD map as our street does not share the quiet, tree lined setting with the neighborhood directly south of us:

- 1) Massive power lines installed over the last year running up to Research Park
- 2) A four lane road with no median and a 35mph speed limit (usually exceeded) with the accompanying noise and safety issues
- 3) A high number of rental properties with owners that are not vested in the area (and probably not represented at public forums)
- 4) Lights from the baseball fields at Sunnyside Park shining into our front windows throughout the night
- 5) Litter and parking issues from nearby sporting events

I feel that the LHD designation is off-target for the Yalecrest community for all of the reasons expounded on at all of the public forums. I would prefer character guidelines and size limitations or else no changes at all to the current zoning.

www.PeakDemocracy.com/534

Yalecrest Local Historic District Designation

The Salt Lake City Planning Division is reviewing a proposed local historic district designation of an area within the Yalecrest neighborhood. What is your opinion on the proposed designation?

All Statements

LIBBY PETERSON in Salt Lake City

October 5, 2010, 4:11 PM

I am very much in favor of preserving the Yalecrest neighborhood and think that an LHD is the best and appropriate way way to do that.

Libby Peterson

1221 South 1300 East

Salt Lake City, UT 84105

James Guilkey in Salt Lake City

October 5, 2010, 3:44 PM

When this issue was previously open on Open City Hall, there were 39 comments, and all but a very few were opposed to the LHD. The City Council has already rejected this unanimously, there is very limited support for it in the neighborhood, why is this issue being revisited by both the Planning Commission and HLC? It seems ridiculous that HLC gets input on whether to increase the area of the city over which they already have jurisdiction.

I remain opposed to the use of the LHD to limit demolitions. There may be some common sense zoning changes that can be made and would be welcomed, but the LHD is much too restrictive.
