



# Staff Report

PLANNING DIVISION

DEPARTMENT of COMMUNITY and NEIGHBORHOODS

**To:** Salt Lake City Planning Commission

**From:** Lex Traughber, Senior Planner  
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**Date:** January 10, 2024

**Re:** PLNPCM2023-00444 –  
Window Requirements for New Construction in the City's Local Historic Districts

## Text Amendment

**PROPERTY ADDRESS:** Applies City-wide

**PARCEL ID:** N/A

**MASTER PLAN:** [Plan Salt Lake \(2015\)](#), [Community Preservation Plan \(2012\)](#)

**ZONING DISTRICT:** Multiple

### REQUEST:

This is a request made by Mayor Erin Mendenhall directing the Planning Division to update the Salt Lake City Zoning Ordinance and the Historic Residential and Multifamily/Historic Apartment Design Guidelines, to address the use of vinyl windows in new construction projects in the City's Local Historic Districts (LHDs). The Planning Commission's role in this process is to make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the proposed text amendments.

### RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission forward a positive recommendation to the City Council for the zoning ordinance text amendment and related design guidelines amendments as proposed.

### ATTACHMENTS:

- A. [ATTACHMENT A: SLC Local Historic Districts Map](#)
- B. [ATTACHMENT B: Window Demonstration Photos](#)
- C. [ATTACHMENT C: Proposed Zoning Ordinance Chapter 21.34.020\(H\) Text](#)
- D. [ATTACHMENT C: Proposed Design Guidelines Text](#)
- E. [ATTACHMENT D: Public Process & Comments](#)
- F. [ATTACHMENT E: Analysis of Standards](#)
- G. [ATTACHMENT F: HLC Staff Report 11/2/2023](#)

## REQUEST DETAILS SNAPSHOT:

The proposed text and guideline amendments impact properties subject to the H Historic Preservation Overlay which includes properties within local historic districts and landmark sites. Salt Lake City currently has 14 local historic districts and approximately 150 Landmark Sites. The proposed changes add clarity to existing processes in terms of appropriate window materials, window location, and window installation in new construction projects. The following summarizes the proposed changes:

### **Proposed Changes/Additions:**

- Adds a section to 21A.34.020(H) to clarify prohibited window material (vinyl) and window location, as well as a minimum window installation depth (3”).
- Adds additional language to the Residential and Historic Apartments & Multi-family Design Guidelines to clarify historically appropriate window materials (Wood, clad wood, and fiberglass) in new construction, the appropriate location and use of vinyl windows in new construction, and the use of aluminum storefront windows at the ground floor where there is a commercial use or amenity space associated with a multi-family building.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND

### ***Issue Background***

Like many historic districts throughout the United States, new infill construction is a regulated design subject to review by local municipalities. In many cases, cities have created design guidelines that help define common elements of historic buildings that should be reflected in new construction. Many cities and towns also have specific ordinance standards addressing new construction as opposed to standards for the treatment of historic structures. This is the case for Salt Lake City. The approach to the design of alterations to historic structures, where it is critical to incorporate and conserve historic materials, forms, and details naturally vary from approaches toward new construction, in which the primary goal is to integrate the new building into the surrounding historic environs that create the character of the historic property or district.

Salt Lake City has followed many of its peers in creating a dual set of standards for historic and new buildings in its historic districts, as well as creating design guidelines to specifically address new construction. A rudimentary set of standards were included in the city's first preservation ordinance in 1976, with most design reviews of new construction reviewed by the then Historic Landmark Committee informally using unadopted, externally developed guidelines, usually developed based on national thinking at the time. In many cases, standards for additions were adapted for new construction. Issues of consistency raised their heads at times. Efforts to standardize both the approach and processes used by the HLC culminated in a new set of standards set forth in the 1995 zoning ordinance rewrite, shortly followed by published design guidelines completed in 1998, which included an extensive section on new construction. Consistent application and interpretation, particularly regarding design details such as window design, continued to be a problem. This factored into a larger reexamination of the city's preservation program, in which clear and consistent, easy-to-understand standards and guidelines were cited as a goal by stakeholders including residents, developers, and policymakers. In 2012, the city rewrote its design guidelines for residential buildings, greatly expanding the guidelines for new construction. Guidelines for multi-family residential and commercial new constructions soon followed in 2015. Later, the city updated its ordinance standards for new construction, again with the goal of increased clarity and consistency.

This evolution has gradually improved the success of projects, both in design and length of review processes and required design revisions. In particular, the new ordinance standards in 21A.34.020.H provide vastly improved clarity for applicants, planning staff, and the members of the HLC in the course

of evaluating new construction. While the concepts of the earlier ordinance remain, the new standards elaborate on these concepts and provide clearer standards of approval that can be tied to adopted design guidelines.

### ***Evaluation***

While broader issues such as building scale, massing, form, and primary materials are being successfully addressed with recent changes, it is increasingly apparent that the standards and guidelines could be improved for clarity when it comes to the design details of new buildings. In particular, issues have emerged in how the existing ordinance standards and guidelines are applied in the case of windows on new principal buildings (single and multifamily), particularly in terms of window material and the manner in which a window is installed.

### ***Issues with Current Standards and Design Guidelines***

In general, there is ample direction in the city's standards and guidelines regarding window size, shape, types, fenestration pattern, and location. All of these attributes are clearly apparent in the building design when it is submitted for review. Planning staff is able to make findings for the HLC, who can then determine whether the project meets these standards and determine whether the windows are appropriate.

At present, inconsistencies arise in review in terms of window material and window installation. The issue is actually three fold:

- First, the current design standards and guidelines somewhat dance around the use of vinyl as an appropriate window material. The design guidelines “discourage” the use of vinyl windows as they are not considered to be a historically appropriate nor a durable material, but they do not outright prohibit their use. There is little guidance toward consistency in what determines an appropriate window material, other than discouraging the use of vinyl as a non-durable material, and encouraging the use of “durable materials” (presumably wood, metal clad wood, composite, etc). As a result, the HLC has required wood or metal clad wood windows on some projects, fiberglass or composite on others, has approved vinyl in many instances, and in rare cases not addressed a window material at all in their final approval.
- Second, design standards and guidelines are somewhat vague regarding the requirement for windows to be set back from the primary wall plane. Section 21A.34.020.H(6)(c) of the zoning ordinance states, “Windows and other openings are incorporated in a manner that reflects patterns, materials, and detailing established in the district and/or setting.” This is based on traditional building patterns and is also intended to provide variation in the wall plane, creating visual interest, and again references traditional design and construction methods. In response to this zoning requirement, planning staff has typically asked developers to include a minimum 3” window reveal and the HLC has approved this window installation detail many times. That said, nowhere in the design standards and guidelines is the depth of a window reveal outlined or stipulated.
- Finally, the manner in which the issue of appropriate window materials and installation in new construction projects is not consistent between the various design guideline documents (Residential and Historic Apartment & Multifamily Buildings), and therefore they cause confusion and uncertainty. The Historic Apartment & Multifamily Building Guidelines are in fact more extensive and descriptive than the Residential Design Guidelines in terms of windows in new construction, however both documents could be ameliorated to provide more clarity. Consistency and clarity is needed between these documents, as well as the zoning ordinance, to further address windows in new construction projects.

### ***Scope and Severity of Problem***

The problem outlined here is most apparent in large-scale multi-family residential projects which take up more and more time on each HLC agenda. Again, this is not a new phenomenon; ordinance

revisions, new design guidelines, and process changes dealing specifically with window approvals are evidence that the HLC has wrestled with this many times before. However, the HLC is wrangling with an approach to windows in a broader building climate in Salt Lake City that has seen a record number of large-scale, multifamily residential projects proposed throughout the city. Logically, it also follows that the larger the building, the more windows the building will have. The window cost in multifamily buildings typically takes up a larger proportion of the overall budget than in smaller projects, making it an attractive line item on which to make changes or opt for less expensive, often vinyl, windows.

Likewise, current design trends tend toward the use of materials that do not create a change in depth between the face of the wall plane and the face of the window. While the design guidelines call for materials that “provide a solid masonry character for lower floors and for the most public facades of the building.” (Guideline 12.69) it is typical to use another material such as siding or stucco on the upper stories of a large multifamily building, particularly those in which several levels of stick-built construction sit on a two or three-story concrete framed base. It is much more difficult to place a recessed window in these types of walls. Problems such as those enumerated above are much more common on these upper stories, and it is in these locations where problems are most apparent.

Attachment B – “Window Demonstration Photos” was included during discussions with the HLC regarding these issues. Planning staff has included these photos with comments in this staff report to help illustrate many of the issues discussed here. Please refer to this attachment for consideration.

Taking the observational or anecdotal data as well as the data analysis above into account, it is apparent that a goal for further reviews of new construction is to:

- Ensure that the ordinance standards and design guidelines are met with regard to windows installed in new construction projects;
- Provide consistency in windows approved for new construction projects; address the specific use of vinyl windows and window installation.

### ***Analysis of Alternatives***

As part of our analysis, Staff reviewed current design guidelines for the use of vinyl windows in new construction from the following cities: Charleston, SC; Savannah, GA; Boise, ID; Boston, MA; Los Angeles, CA; Charlotte, NC; Denver, New Orleans, LA; Portland, OR; South Bend, IN; Nashville, TN; Ogden, UT. The vast majority of these cities do not allow vinyl windows in new construction. Some however do allow them, surprisingly Charleston, SC and New Orleans, LA. A summary of the findings from the above referenced cities is as follows:

City	Allow Vinyl?	Hybrid	Contact	Notes
Austin	No			
Boise	No		Richard Jarvis	
Boston	No	Yes	Nicholas Aramata	No vinyl in general, but can use on "exempt" unseen facades
Charleston	Yes			See written policy statement
Charlotte	No		Candace Leite/Laura Bandara	
Denver	No		Abigail Christman	
Indianapolis	No			
Los Angeles	No		Shannon Ryan	Unless an economic burden, wood framed windows are req on all facades
Memphis	No	Yes		Does allow vinyl and aluminum clad. Composites on 3rd story and above
Nashville	No/Yes		Robin Ziegler	Generally vinyl is not ok, however some vinyl brands have been approved
New Orleans	Yes		Eleanor Burke	Provided a list of approved windows
Ogden	No regs			
Portland	No		Brandon Spencer-Hartle	New construction - Wood, metal clad wood, fiberglass
Savannah	No			See written policy statement
South Bend	No regs		Adam Toering	SB experiences little to no new construction in LHDs

Some cities have a sort of “hybrid” policy regarding vinyl windows, depending on the location, visibility from the street, and installation of a proposed window vis-à-vis siding materials, a vinyl window may be appropriate in some instances.

Work sessions were held with the HLC to discuss this issue on March 2 & May 4, 2023. Prior to the work session on May 4, Planning Staff conducted a field trip to look at windows in various new construction projects in the Capitol Hill and the South Temple Local Historic Districts. Planning Staff pointed out to the members of the HLC both good and poor examples of windows installed in said new construction projects. At the second work session on May 4<sup>th</sup>, the HLC directed Planning Staff to pursue a “hybrid” approach to the use of vinyl windows in new construction in the City’s local historic districts.

A public hearing was held with the HLC on November 2, 2023 regarding this matter. The HLC recommended a couple of small wording changes, but voted unanimously to support the proposed changes and to forward a positive recommendation on to the City Council for consideration.

## KEY CONSIDERATION

The key consideration and concern below has been identified through the analysis of the project:

### Compliance with City Goals, Policies, and Master Plans

**Preservation Philosophy:** In November, 2011, the Salt Lake City Council adopted a *Preservation Philosophy* (Resolution 53 of 2011) to guide the City’s Preservation Program. Some of the policy directives from this document relate directly to the current project, namely:

- Achieve a successful city-wide historic preservation program by clearly conveying historic preservation objectives, opportunities, and benefits while consistently interpreting and applying the City’s adopted standards and efficiently administering the process.
- The Historic Preservation Overlay District standards are to be used as the basis for decision making when considering applications for Certificates of Appropriateness. Apply standards in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

The proposed amendments aim to make standards clear and predictable to improve applicants’ understanding of the requirements and decision makers’ ability to efficiently administer the zoning ordinance.

**Community Preservation Plan:** Another significant guiding document for Salt Lake City’s historic preservation program is the *Community Preservation Plan* (2012). This document adds context, detail, and direction in implementing the broad outlines of the city’s adopted preservation philosophy.

The *Community Preservation Plan* has a number of policies related to the proposed amendments. The proposed amendments include new language to clarify appropriate and inappropriate window materials, placement/location, and installation in new construction projects in the City’s local historic district. The following policies outlined in this plan are relevant to the proposed amendments:

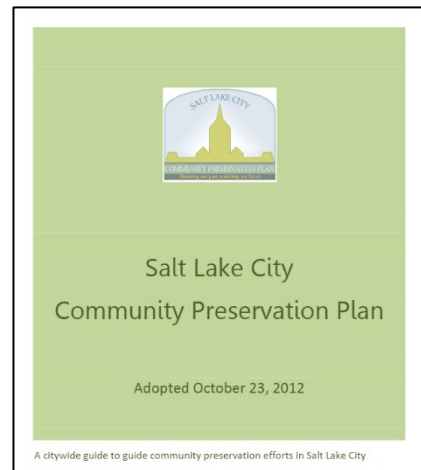
Policy 4.2b: Improve user-friendliness of the decision-making process. The City will work to make participation in the preservation program as clear, predictable, and as easy as possible. This will be achieved through developing informational resources and making necessary procedural changes.

Policy 4.2c: Ensure informational resources are available to assist applicants in knowing the requirements, and timeframes for each step to help them successfully navigate the process.

Policy 6.1c: Encourage the use of sustainable building practices that comply with adopted policy, guidelines and regulations relating to historic preservation in the renovation and maintenance of historic structures.

Policy 6.1d: Ensure adopted guidelines and regulations allow for the appropriate use of green building practices as they emerge.

Policy 6.1e: The incorporation of green building practices is encouraged whenever they are compatible with best historic preservation practices.



**Plan Salt Lake:** Finally, preservation is mentioned as a specific objective of Plan Salt Lake (2015), Salt Lake City's citywide master plan with the guiding principle of "maintaining places that provide a foundation for the City to affirm our past." Additional context and guidance are given to this citywide objective through a series of initiatives, many of which directly relate to and support the proposed changes.

- Preserve and enhance neighborhood and district character.
- Retain areas and structures of historic and architectural value.
- Integrate preservation into City regulation, policy, and decision making.
- Balance preservation with flexibility for change and growth.
- Improve education and outreach about the value of historic preservation.



The purpose statement for the H – Historic Preservation Overlay District is as follows:

In order to contribute to the welfare, prosperity and education of the people of Salt Lake City, the purpose of the H historic preservation overlay district is to:

1. Provide the means to protect and preserve areas of the city and individual structures and sites having historic, architectural or cultural significance;
2. Encourage new development, redevelopment and the subdivision of lots in historic districts that is compatible with the character of existing development of historic districts or individual landmarks;
3. Abate the destruction and demolition of historic structures;
4. Implement adopted plans of the city related to historic preservation;
5. Foster civic pride in the history of Salt Lake City;



6. Protect and enhance the attraction of the city's historic landmarks and districts for tourists and visitors;
7. Foster economic development consistent with historic preservation; and
8. Encourage social, economic and environmental sustainability.

The proposed amendments, in clarifying and updating language to incorporate new development criteria that are critical to the implementation of the city's Historic Preservation Program are fully consistent with these purposes.

### **PROPOSED AMENDMENTS (See attachments for the full text)**

The proposed zoning ordinance text and proposed amended guidelines are attached – See Attachments A & B.

### **APPROVAL PROCESS AND COMMISSION AUTHORITY**

The proposal is for a zoning ordinance text amendment (21A.34.020(H)) and amendments to the Historic Residential and Historic Apartment & Multi-family Design Guidelines. The HLC is the policy-making body that would analyze alternatives to achieve the aforementioned issues.

The Planning Commission will also weigh in on this issue as it is a zoning ordinance text amendment. The Planning Commission will make a recommendation to the City Council based on the standards for zoning ordinance text amendments found in chapter 21A.50.050A. As previously mentioned, the HLC voted unanimously to forward a positive recommendation based on these same standards.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

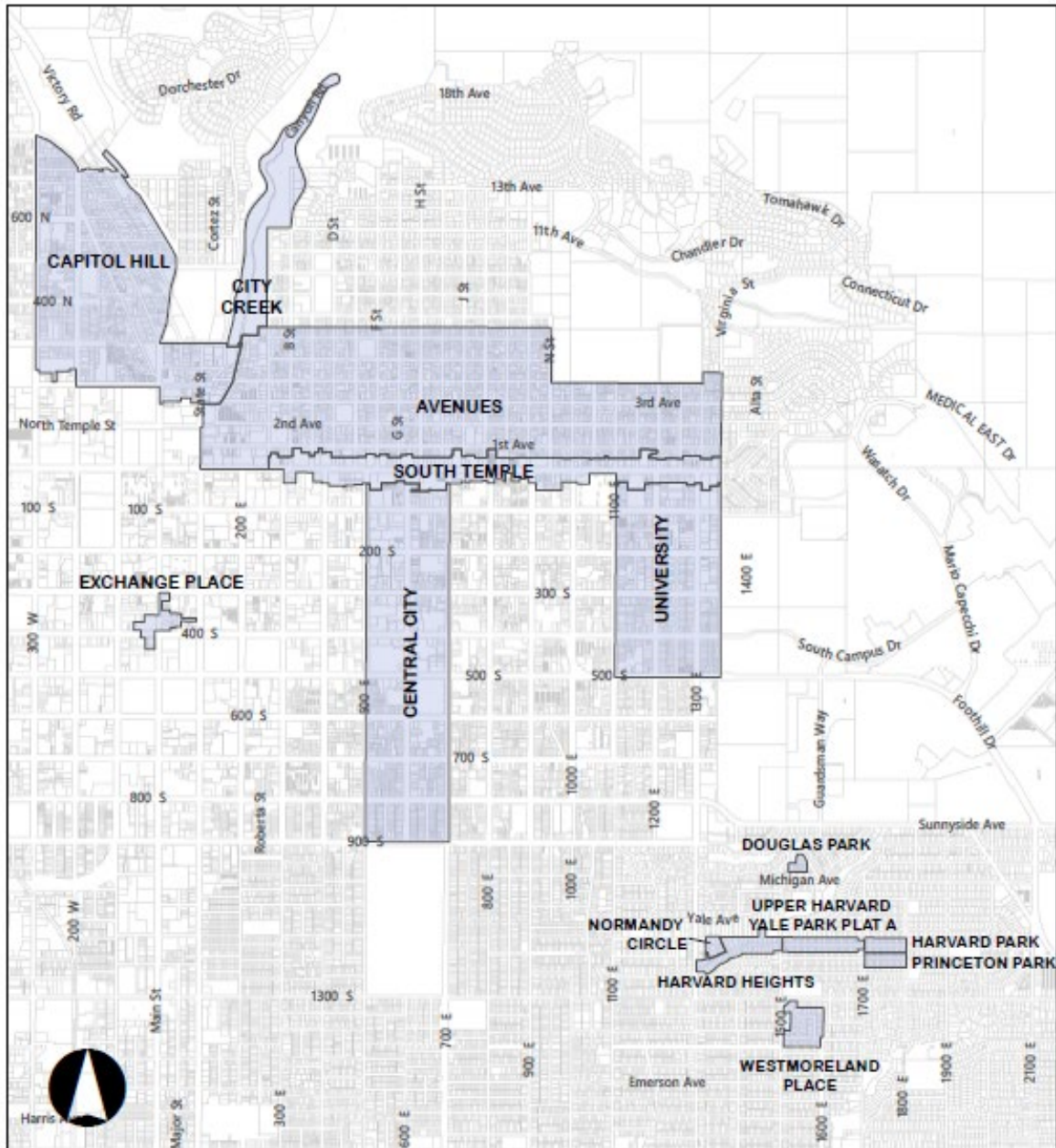
Staff recommends that the Planning Commission forward a positive recommendation to the City Council for the proposed text and design guideline amendments.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Planning Staff will prepare a transmittal report for consideration by the City Council. Both the recommendations of the Historic Landmark Commission and the Planning Commission will be included in the report to the City Council for their consideration.

# ATTACHMENT A: SLC Local Historic Districts Map

## SALT LAKE CITY LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

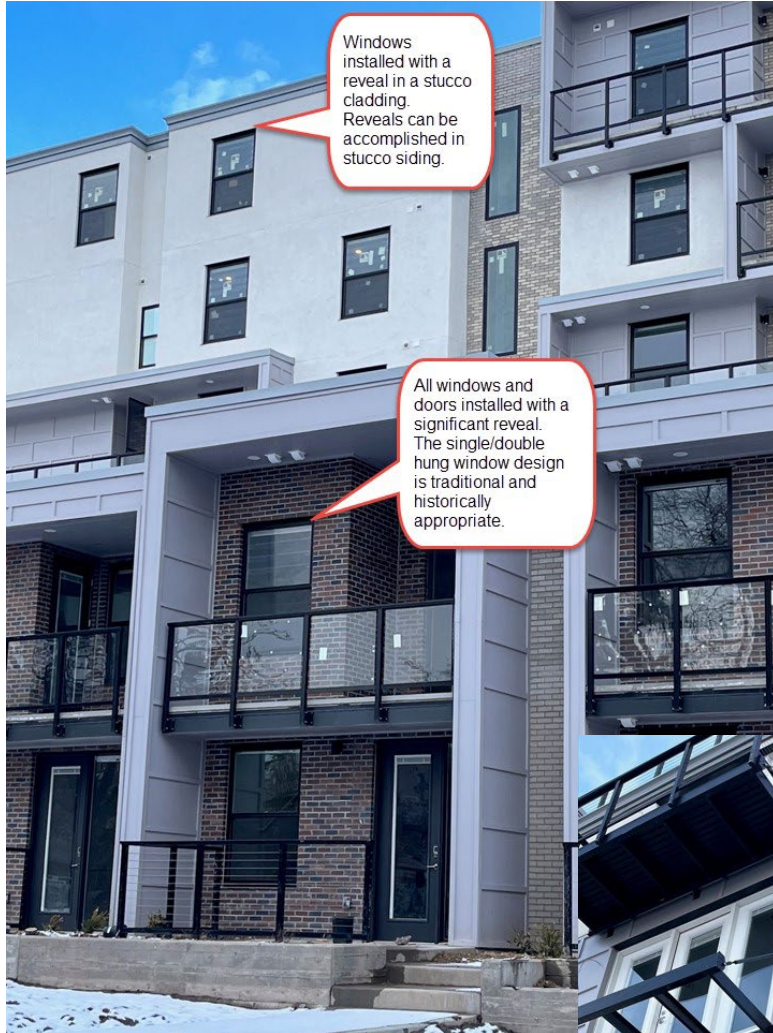




## ATTACHMENT B: Window Demonstration Photos











Typical vinyl window - Notice the narrow rail and stile. Also boxy with no decorative detail like one would find with wood.



Typical wood window - Notice the level of detail and thicker dimension in the different planes that compose the frame, stile and rail.

# ATTACHMENT C: Proposed Zoning Ordinance

## Chapter 21.34.020(H) Text

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*Please note: The underlined text below is new text proposed to be added, and strike-through text is proposed to be deleted. Text not underlined in this section or without a strikethrough is existing text in the Code or Design Guidelines and will not be changed.*

H. Standards For Certificate Of Appropriateness Involving New Construction Or Alteration Of A Noncontributing Structure: In considering an application for a certificate of appropriateness involving new construction, or alterations of noncontributing structures, the Historic Landmark Commission, or Planning Director when the application involves the alteration of a noncontributing structure shall, using the adopted design guidelines as a key basis for evaluation, determine whether the project substantially complies with each of the following standards that pertain to the application to ensure that the proposed project fits into the established context in ways that respect and contribute to the evolution of Salt Lake City's architectural and cultural traditions:

1. Settlement Patterns And Neighborhood Character:

a. Block And Street Patterns: The design of the project preserves and reflects the historic block, street, and alley patterns that give the district its unique character. Changes to the block and street pattern may be considered when advocated by an adopted City plan.

b. Lot And Site Patterns: The design of the project preserves the pattern of lot and building site sizes that create the urban character of the historic context and the block face. Changes to the lot and site pattern may be considered when advocated by an adopted City plan.

c. The Public Realm: The project relates to adjacent streets and engages with sidewalks in a manner that reflects the character of the historic context and the block face. Projects should maintain the depth of yard and height of principal elevation of those existing on the block face in order to support consistency in the definition of public and semi-public spaces.

d. Building Placement: Buildings are placed such that the project maintains and reflects the historic pattern of setbacks and building depth established within the historic context and the block face. Buildings should maintain the setback demonstrated by existing buildings of that type constructed in the district or site's period of significance.

e. Building Orientation: The building is designed such that principal entrances and pathways are oriented such that they address the street in the pattern established in the historic context and the block face.

2. Site Access, Parking, And Services:

a. Site Access: The design of the project allows for site access that is similar, in form and function, with patterns common in the historic context and the block face.

(1) Pedestrian: Safe pedestrian access is provided through architecturally highlighted entrances and walkways, consistent with patterns common in the historic context and the block face.

(2) Vehicular: Vehicular access is located in the least obtrusive manner possible. Where possible, garage doors and parking should be located to the rear or to the side of the building.

b. Site And Building Services And Utilities: Utilities and site/building services (such as HVAC systems, venting fans, and dumpsters) are located such that they are to the rear of the building or on the roof and screened from public spaces and public properties.

3. Landscape And Lighting:

a. Grading Of Land: The site's landscape, such as grading and retaining walls, addresses the public way in a manner that reflects the character of the historic context and the block face.

b. Landscape Structures: Landscape structures, such as arbors, walls, fences, address the public way in a manner that reflects the character of the historic context and the block face.

c. Lighting: Where appropriate lighting is used to enhance significant elements of the design and reflects the character of the historic context and the block face.

#### 4. Building Form And Scale:

a. Character Of The Street Block: The design of the building reflects the historic character of the street facade in terms of scale, composition, and modeling.

(1) Height: The height of the project reflects the character of the historic context and the block face. Projects taller than those existing on the block face step back their upper floors to present a base that is in scale with the historic context and the block face.

(2) Width: The width of the project reflects the character of the historic context and the block face. Projects wider than those existing on the block face modulate the facade to express a series of volumes in scale with the historic context and the block face.

(3) Massing: The shape, form, and proportion of buildings, reflects the character of the historic context and the block face.

(4) Roof Forms: The building incorporates roof shapes that reflect forms found in the historic context and the block face.

#### 5. Building Character:

a. Facade Articulation And Proportion: The design of the project reflects patterns of articulation and proportion established in the historic context and the block face. As appropriate, facade articulations reflect those typical of other buildings on the block face. These articulations are of similar dimension to those found elsewhere in the context, but have a depth of not less than twelve inches (12").

(1) Rhythm Of Openings: The facades are designed to reflect the rhythm of openings (doors, windows, recessed balconies, etc.) established in the historic context and the block face.

(2) Proportion And Scale Of Openings: The facades are designed using openings (doors, windows, recessed balconies, etc.) of similar proportion and scale to that established in the historic context and the block face.

(3) Ratio Of Wall To Openings: Facades are designed to reflect the ratio of wall to openings (doors, windows, recessed balconies, etc.) established in the historic context and the block face.

(4) Balconies, Porches, And External Stairs: The project, as appropriate, incorporates entrances, balconies, porches, stairways, and other projections that reflect patterns established in the historic context and the block face.

#### 6. Building Materials, Elements And Detailing:

a. Materials: Building facades, other than windows and doors, incorporate no less than eighty percent (80%) durable material such as, but not limited to, wood, brick, masonry, textured or patterned concrete and/or cut stone. These materials reflect those found elsewhere in the district and/or setting in terms of scale and character.

b. Materials On Street-Facing Facades: The following materials are not considered to be appropriate and are prohibited for use on facades which face a public street: vinyl siding and aluminum siding.

~~c. Windows: Windows and other openings are incorporated in a manner that reflects patterns, materials, and detailing established in the district and/or setting.~~

c. d. Architectural Elements And Details: The design of the building features architectural elements and details that reflect those characteristic of the district and/or setting.



7. Windows: Windows and other openings are incorporated in a manner that reflects patterns, materials, and detailing established in the district and/or setting.

a. Window installation depth: Window reveals shall be a minimum of 3”.

b. Prohibited window material: Vinyl windows are not considered to be historically appropriate nor durable, and are prohibited for use where they are readily visible from the street (public and private).

8. 7. Signage Location: Locations for signage are provided such that they are an integral part of the site and architectural design and are complementary to the principal structure.

# ATTACHMENT C: Proposed Design Guidelines Text

## Residential Design Guidelines Chapter 12: New Construction

### Windows

Window openings often provide a considerable degree of modeling to the building facades, with a distinctive recess (window reveal) of the plane of the window from the plane of the wall. This characteristic enhances the visual strength of a facade, conveying a sense of the depth and solidity of the wall, and distinct areas of shadow which change with the time of day and the season. This recess also helps to shelter the window and the window frame. Windows also provide a medium for fine detail and craftsmanship, using decorative pattern, lead and often stained glass.

#### **12.20 Windows with vertical emphasis are encouraged.**

- A general rule is that the height of a vertically proportioned window should be twice the dimension of the width in most residential contexts.
- Certain styles and contexts, e.g. the bungalow form, will often be characterized by horizontally proportioned windows.
- See also the discussions of the character of the relevant historic district (PART III) and architectural styles (Ch.4, PART I).

#### **12.21 Window reveals should be a characteristic of most masonry facades.**

- This helps to emphasize the character of the facade modeling and materials.
- It should enhance the degree to which the building integrates with its historic setting.
- It also helps to avoid the impression of superficiality which can be inherent in some more recent construction, e.g. with applied details like window surrounds.
- Typical historic window reveals are 3-4" in depth.

#### **12.22 Windows and doors should be framed in materials that appear similar in scale, proportion and character to those used traditionally in the neighborhood.**

- Double-hung windows with traditional reveal depth and trim will be characteristic of most districts.
- Window profiles should project from the plane of the glass creating a distinct hierarchy of detail for the window opening and the composition of the facade.
- Durable window frame construction and materials should be used.
- Window frame finish should be of durable architectural quality, chosen to compliment the building design.
- Wood, clad wood, and fiberglass are generally appropriate window materials.
- Vinyl should be avoided as a non-durable material in the regional climate.
- Vinyl windows, on rear and secondary facades, where they are not readily visible from the street (public or private), will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- See also the rehabilitation section on windows (PART II, Ch.3) as well as the discussions of specific historic districts (PART III) and relevant architectural styles (PART I, Ch.4).

## **Historic Apartments & Multifamily Buildings Design Guidelines**

### **Chapter 12 – Design Guidelines for New Construction**

#### **WINDOWS**

Of the many architectural characteristics of the design of a building façade, the design of the windows is perhaps the most important. Window openings provide a considerable degree of modeling and detail to the facades, with the window reveals creating a distinctive recess of the plane of the reflective window from the plane and texture of the wall.

Window reveals enhance the sense of visual strength of the facade, conveying an impression of the depth, solidity and permanence of the wall. The difference in plane between window and wall surface also creates distinctive light, shadow and reflection which will change with the time of day, and also with the season. This recess also helps to shelter the window and the window frame, and helps to moderate solar gain.

Window openings and design are the focus of finer frame detailing and craftsmanship, in the past using classical frame profiles, decorative subdivided or leaded lights and often stained glass. The form, the subdivision and the profiles of the window framing, their finishes and colors, play a major role in creating the modeling, detailing, quality and richness, and consequently the perceived scale of the building.

#### **Design Objective**

The design of a new multifamily building should include window design subdivision, profiles, materials, finishes and details which ensure that the windows play their characteristic positive role in defining the proportion and character of the building and its contribution to the historic context.

#### **12.71 Windows should be designed to be in scale with those characteristic of the building and the historic setting.**

- Excessive window scale in a new building, whether vertical or horizontal, will adversely affect the sense of human scale and affinity with buildings in the district.
- Subdivide a larger window area to form a group or pattern of windows creating more appropriate proportions, dimensions and scale.

#### **12.72 Windows with vertical proportion and emphasis are encouraged.**

- A vertical proportion is likely to have greater design affinity with the historic context.
- It helps to create a stronger vertical emphasis which can be valuable integrating the design of a larger scale building within its context.
- See also the discussion of the character of the relevant historic district and architectural styles (PART I).

#### **12.73 Window reveals should be a characteristic of masonry and most public facades.**

- These help to express the character of the facade modeling and materials.
- Window reveals will enhance the degree to which the building integrates with its historic setting.
- A reveal should be recessed into the primary plane of the wall, and not achieved by applying window trim to the façade.
- This helps to avoid the impression of superficiality which can be inherent in some more recent construction, e.g. with applied details like window trim and surrounds.

- A hierarchy of window reveals can effectively complement the composition of the fenestration and facades.
- Typical historic window reveals are 3-4" in depth.

**12.74 Windows and doors should be ~~framed in~~ materials that appear similar in scale, proportion and character to those used traditionally in the neighborhood.**

- ~~Frame~~ Window profiles should project from the plane of the glass creating a distinct hierarchy of ~~secondary modeling and~~ detail for the window opening and the composition of the facade.
- Durable window frame construction and materials should be used.
- Window F-frame finish should be of durable architectural quality, chosen to compliment the building design.
- Wood, clad wood, and fiberglass are generally appropriate window materials.
- Vinyl should be avoided as a non-durable material in the regional climate.
- Vinyl windows, on rear and secondary facades, where they are not readily visible from the street (public or private), will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Aluminum storefront windows may be appropriate at the ground floor where there is a commercial use or amenity space associated with a multi-family building, and will be considered on a case by case basis.
- Dark or reflective glass should be avoided.
- See also the rehabilitation section on windows (PART II, Ch.3) as well as the discussions of specific historic districts (PART III) and relevant architectural styles (PART I).

# ATTACHMENT D: Public Process & Comments

## Public Notice, Meetings, Comments

The following is a list of public meetings that have been held, and other public input opportunities, related to the proposed project since the application was submitted:

- March 2, 2023 – Work Session – A work session was held with the Historic Landmark Commission to obtain direction regarding the proposed amendments. The HLC asked for some additional follow-up information.
- May 4, 2023 – Windows Tour – Conducted a tour with the Historic Landmark Commission to look at various examples (both good and bad) of window types and installations, in and around the Capitol Hill and South Temple Local Historic Districts.
- May 4, 2023 – Work Session – A work session was held with the Historic Landmark Commission to obtain direction regarding the proposed amendments. The HLC directed Planning Staff to pursue a “hybrid” approach to the use of vinyl windows in new construction in the City’s historic districts.
- August 21, 2023 – Open House – An on-line open house was posted to the Planning Division’s website to solicit comment from the public regarding the proposed zoning ordinance text language and design guidelines language.
- October 23, 2023 – Consistent with State law, a notice of the Historic Landmark Commission meeting was posted at the Marmalade, Sweet, Anderson Foothill, and Main Libraries.
- October 19, 2023 - Public notice for the November 2, 2023, HLC hearing was posted on City and State websites and Planning Division list serve.
- November 2, 2023 – Historic Landmark Commission public hearing. The HLC recommended a couple of small wording changes, but voted unanimously to support the proposed changes and to forward a positive recommendation on to the City Council for consideration.

As of the preparation and distribution of this staff report, one public comment was received.





December 6, 2022

TO: Salt Lake City Planning Commission  
Salt Lake City Landmark's Commission

FROM: Judi Short, Vice Chair and Land Use Chair   
Sugar House Community Council

RE: PLNPCM2023-00444 Text Amendment Related to Window Requirements for New Construction in the City's  
Local Historic Districts

This petition was discussed at the August 21 meeting of the SHCC Land Use Committee.

Please read the attached brochure about Vinyl windows. There are many negative reasons why these are a bad idea. The manufacture of polyvinyl chloride (PVC) is one of the most toxic production processes there is.

We need to be clear that this ordinance to prohibit vinyl windows is only for new construction. We feel that vinyl windows should not be used if the window is visible from the street. And a hybrid approach seems to be reasonable, and it is too bad if that takes more staff time. We want our wonderful neighborhoods to remain, and not start to look tacky because cheap materials are being used. We have enough of that in the rest of our city, we don't need it in our historic districts. We realize that the cost of a wooden window is more than a vinyl window, but maybe the fact that they will last forever will tip the scale? My house is 125 years old, the guy who "restored" the home to a liveable condition in the 1970s, before I purchased the house, took out the wooden windows, and replaced them with very cheap single pane aluminum windows that didn't keep a bit of warmth in the house. The vinyl windows I put in thirty+ years ago made a big difference in terms of heat loss, as did the foam insulation in all the walls. I would have put in wooden replacements if I had the money. And the vinyl windows are still in prefect condition.

We think that a hybrid approach to this is the right thing to do. Each project needs to be reviewed separately, to ensure that the end result will be satisfactory. The new construction needs to fit into the "old" neighborhood.

I have attached a couple of comments from the committee.

Enclosure:

Comments – Windows in Historic Neighborhoods

## COMMENTS – Windows in Historic Neighborhoods from SHCC

The Window petition is to allow more flexibility in building materials in new construction on non-primary visualized surfaces. I agree the petition is poorly worded and needs more clarity. I do suggest moderation for limiting building material types as manufacturing is always changing and improving and if you allow aluminum clad wood, often painted, why not other types of cladding. The primary structure and design are more important than individual windows off main sight lines.

Heidi Schubert 831 Coatsville Ave

I don't think that vinyl windows would be appropriate for new (or old) construction in an historic area. First, and I know because I have some) they are ugly and they are not environmentally friendly (they are made from refined oil and theoretically will take around 1000 years to decompose!). They only last about 20 years (less if exposed to extreme temps and full sun for long periods), the wood windows I have are over 100 years old and still holding. I understand it's more expensive, but if you are building in a historic district then you should be required to build something that fits into the historic area and should be around long enough to actually become "historic". Yvonne Martinez

# ATTACHMENT E: Analysis of Standards

## ZONING TEXT AMENDMENTS

**21A.50.050:** A decision to amend the text of this title or the zoning map by general amendment is a matter committed to the legislative discretion of the city council and is not controlled by any one standard. In making a decision concerning a proposed text amendment, the City Council should consider the following:

### 1. Whether a proposed text amendment is consistent with the purposes, goals, objectives, and policies of the city as stated through its various adopted planning documents;

**Finding:** Complies; The proposal is consistent with Preservation Philosophy, the Community Preservation Plan, Plan Salt Lake, and the purpose of the H Historic Preservation Overlay District.

#### **Discussion:**

Please see the “Key Consideration” section above for discussion on how the proposal complies with the purpose, goals, objectives, and other City policies.

### 2. Whether a proposed text amendment furthers the specific purpose statements of the zoning ordinance.

**Finding:** Complies; The proposal generally furthers the purpose statements of the zoning ordinance.

#### **Discussion:**

#### Zoning District Purposes

#### 21A.50.010 Zoning Amendment Purpose Statement

The zoning amendment section of the ordinance notes the following with regard to its purposes:

*The purpose of this chapter is to provide standards and procedures for making amendments to the text of this title and to the zoning map. This amendment process is not intended to relieve particular hardships nor to confer special privileges or rights upon any person, but only to make adjustments necessary in light of changed conditions or changes in public policy.*

This proposal is consistent with the general purpose of making changes in light of changed conditions related to implementation of the H Historic Preservation Overlay District.

### 3. Whether a proposed text amendment is consistent with the purposes and provisions of any applicable overlay zoning districts which may impose additional standards;

**Finding:** Complies; The proposed amendments impact the H Historic Preservation Overlay District and are consistent with the standards and purpose of that overlay zone.

**Discussion:**

Please see the “Key Consideration” section above for discussion on how the proposal complies with the purpose, goals, and City policies related to the H Historic Preservation Overlay District.

**4. The extent to which a proposed text amendment implements best current, professional practices of urban planning and design.**

**Finding:** Complies

**Discussion:**

The proposed amendments seek to improve the usability of the code by clarifying language and aligning standards and process with other City policy documents. It is beneficial for Salt Lake City to make code revisions that lead to a greater ease of use and understanding for the public and decision makers.

The proposed amendments are consistent with best practices with regard to public process for decisions regarding properties in the H Historic Preservation Overlay District.

## **ATTACHMENT F: HLC Staff Report 11/2/2023**

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Please click [HERE](#)