

*Get to Know Dearborn's*

# *Historic District Ordinance*

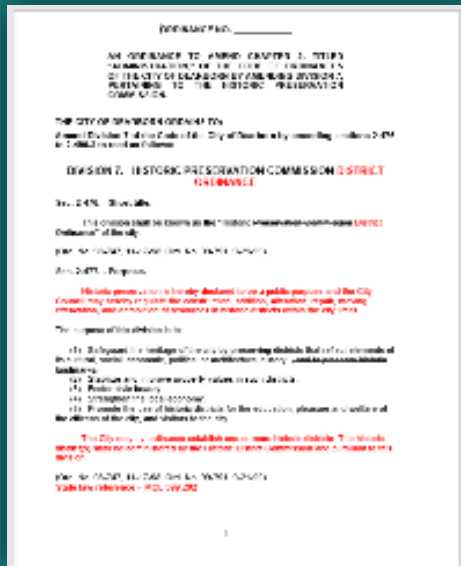


**PRESERVATION  
DEARBORN**

June 8, 2022



# What is a Historic District Ordinance (HDO)?



- A legislative framework that allows interested residents to pursue local historic district designation
- Model ordinance crafted by the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
- Adopted in more than 75 Michigan cities (including neighbors Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Plymouth, Northville, Canton and Detroit)
- Different than honorific titles, such as National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) listing or Michigan State Historic Site designation
- Designation as a Local Historic District, administered by a locally-appointed Historic District Commission, is the only way to prevent a designated structure from being demolished

# Dearborn's HDO



- Adopted in 1999
- Has not been used to create a historic district (Ford Homes passed 1979; Springwells Park NRHP only)
- The ordinance's language has not been modified since implementation 22 years ago, and requires updates to conform to State's model language and requirements
- City Council and staff began exploring updates late in 2019, prompted by Arsenal-Riverbend residents' interest in forming a new historic district
- Mayoral Briefing in September 2019; three study sessions 2019-2021, most recent November 10, 2021
- Tabled in January 2021

# How Does it Work?



- City Council appoints a *Historic District Study Committee*; conducts research/inventory of structures or neighborhoods to determine historic merit/eligibility for designation
- *Committee* prepares preliminary report recommending a structure/neighborhood for designation; works with SHPO, Michigan Historical Commission, City Planner, Property Maintenance & Development Services (PMADS), and Economic and Community Development (ECDD)
- City Council holds public hearings and, by majority vote, designates a structure or neighborhood, according to the *Committee's* report
- Once created, exterior modifications within a district are overseen by a city-wide *Historic District Commission*, appointed by City Council
- *Commission* approves or denies work in a district, according to the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation" for exterior work



# *Important Points*



- Updating Dearborn's HDO does NOT automatically create any new historic districts
- Only City Council has the power to create or dissolve historic districts
- The historic review process applies ONLY to exterior changes to a structure
- District nomination is a lengthy process (~2 years), involving required public meetings/input
- Structures must be 50 years old or older to be designated
- Newer structures within district boundaries are NOT held to historic standards

## *Why Preserve Historic Structures?*



- Michigan Historic Preservation Network (MHPN) study found home values in historic districts were 6% to 21% higher than similar non-designated homes
- Adaptive reuse has positive environmental impacts: “the greenest building is the one already built” – Architect Carl Elefante, AIA, LEED AP
- Historic structures contain structural and aesthetic treasures (ex., old-growth timber) that are superior to similar modern materials
- Preserving the homes/structures of generations past reinforces a stable community identity, attracting new homeowners and “heritage tourism”
- Vibrant communities in southeastern Michigan have found that residential historic districts can coexist with new construction, attracting a diverse mix of home buyers

## *Support Historic Preservation?*

Voice your Support for Updating Dearborn's HDO to City Council!

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*Thanks for Listening!*



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