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# Historic Preservation: Annual Report FY 2016-2017

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Prepared September 22, 2017

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City of Gainesville, Florida

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Architecture in Gainesville's five historic districts

## **A Report to the City Commission**

### **Mayor**

Lauren Poe

### **Commission Members**

Helen Warren

Harvey Budd

Charles Goston

Harvey Ward

David Arreola

Adrian Hayes-Santos



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## 1. Introduction

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The Historic Preservation division of the Department of Doing is proud to represent the energy and momentum of the City of Gainesville. Gainesville is growing and brimming with innovation, and the Historic Preservation Staff lead in providing citizen-centered service, managing change that occurs in our historic districts, and ensuring that our built heritage will reflect the forward-thinking nature of our community while acknowledging the role that historic architecture plays in defining Gainesville.

The Historic Preservation team has just been awarded the City's 2017 Employee Recognition for Community Relations. This year's Annual Report reflects the work we have done to meet citizen needs and build stronger relationships with our residents, the private sector, the University of Florida and local and state governments. We have completed all recommended actions from the 2016 audit and created additional goals and a work plan that will carry on the professional nature of the audit's corrective actions. We have proactively sought positive relationships with our community through outreach projects such as volunteer cleanup days and project support and advisement for building owners and applicants. We will continue to expand our community outreach and educational opportunities during our grant-funded survey this upcoming year. Our community relations goal includes providing clear and reliable information to the public; we have updated our historic district maps on our revised webpage and have included the register of historic properties for the entire city. Over the next year we will update our design guidelines and create a larger inventory of surveyed properties for citizen and Staff use.

The Annual Report also reflects our progress in planning management. We have developed a solid, organizational basis for future projects by making our processes more efficient and ensuring that Staff and the Historic Preservation Board follow standard procedure as listed in our ordinances. We have streamlined our forms, presentations and staff reports, and developed tracking mechanisms for annual assessment and updates. As part of the Department of Doing, we have created new, graphically clear brochures for residents of the historic districts, and will continue to update our forms and public information to this higher standard.

The work reflected in the Annual Report was accomplished by a small team of Staff and our Historic Preservation Board members. We have achieved numerous goals and have created a solid foundation of organization and expertise for next year's work. While historic preservation values the past, we are inspired and driven by the present but also look forward to the future. Our work is not done when a district is designated, for our cities continue to change and our districts and heritage change with them. Of utmost importance for the future of the Historic Preservation division is to be mindful that our mission was created by our constituents and our work must be relevant to the needs of our communities. We look forward to an exciting, new Fiscal Year.

## 2. Audit Reporting

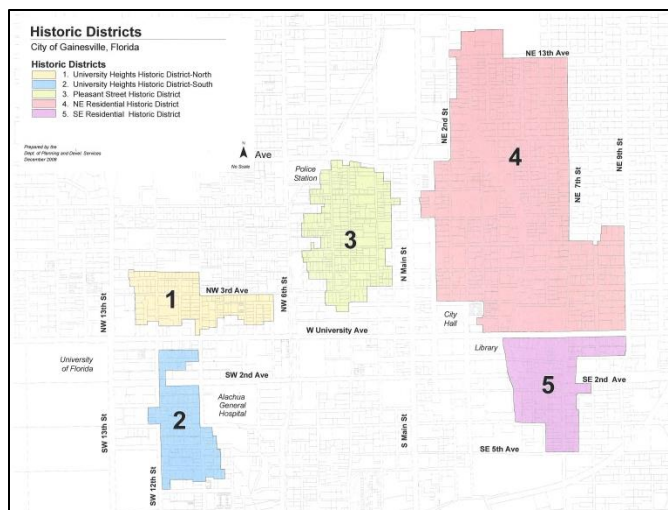
An audit of the Historic Preservation Board (HPB) Processes and Practices was submitted to the City Commission on May 31, 2016. The Historic Preservation Staff is pleased to respond with the following updated assessment, based on the audit's Appendix A "Management Response and Corrective Action Plan."

Recommendation	Corrective Action Taken	Proposed Completion Date
<i>Recommendations for Planning Management to:</i>		
A) Develop a current and accessible local register of historic places.	The National and Local Register listings have been placed on the Historic Preservation webpage, in an easy-to-read format which includes a link to the National Park Service documentation. Register listings have also been included in our interactive maps on the Planning Departments webpage.  See "Mapping" update below for further information.	Sept. 2017/ Ongoing for updates
B) 1. Ensure that signed Memorandum of Voting Conflict Forms are completed by HPB members to document conflicts of interest.	Completed	Ongoing as needed per Petition.
2. Retain copies of submitted Memorandum of Voting Conflict Forms.	Completed	Ongoing as needed per Petition.
3. Ensure that conflicted members do not vote on projects.	Completed	Ongoing as needed per Petition.

Recommendation	Corrective Action Taken	Proposed Completion Date
C) Work with the HPB members to compile and submit an annual report of its activities to the City Commission.	Completed annually, during the Budget Hearing Process for City Advisory Boards.	Ongoing annually
D) Work with the City Attorney to ensure that revised HPB rules are submitted to the City Commission for approval.	Revised rules are in Attorney's office to be presented to the City Commission along with revised rules from the other quasi-judicial boards.	Rules reviewed most recently at January 2017 HPB meeting.
E) Ensure collected amounts entered in <i>Innoprise</i> are reconciled with the accounting system, monthly (at a minimum).	All <i>Innoprise</i> amounts have been reconciled with the accounting system. The Staff collecting the fees and application provides a report to Building Division Staff that completes a Batch Report that is reconciled daily. The daily batch reports are then sent to Finance, whose staff also review and check the reports for any inconsistencies.	No further action needed
F) 1. Historic Preservation Guidelines should be enhanced for clarity of preservation requirements.	<p>The Historic Preservation division has been awarded a grant from the State Division of Historic Resources (DHR) for survey work and guideline updates. See "Division of Historic Resources (DHR) Grant" update below for detailed information on work plan and schedule.</p> <p>Staff has been working with material reps to update our library of appropriate rehabilitation materials and provide a clearer description of which products and materials are appropriate for our historic districts. This information will be updated in the Design Guidelines.</p>	<p>July 2018</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Recommendation	Corrective Action Taken	Proposed Completion Date
<p>2. Citizen should be provided better tools for accessing and comprehending Guidelines and related material.</p>	<p>The updated Guidelines will be structured for clarity and efficiency. After the Guidelines are created, the Staff will develop brochures and website material for further accessibility.</p> <p>Staff created a brochure entitled, "Guidance for Residents of Historic Districts" aimed at providing citizens an easy to understand resource for common questions and answers.</p> <p>Staff is revising the HPB Meeting Schedule and Application Deadline form to ensure applicant clarity. Staff is creating a brochure about the Historic Preservation Property Tax Exemption.</p> <p>The brochures and forms will be placed on our updated webpage.</p>	<p>Summer 2018</p> <p>February 2017</p> <p>November 2017</p>
<p>G) Proactively seek opportunities for external grant funding to assist with historic preservation efforts.</p>	<p>Grants received include: the Old Train Depot, Thomas Center building improvements and the DHR funding for survey and guidelines updates. Additionally, we received \$30,000 from the City Commission for work in the Pleasant Street Neighborhood, of which some funding is still available for use. See "Pleasant Street Historic Stabilization Fund" below for further information.</p> <p>The Staff will continue to develop and prioritize projects for future grant funding. We are a Certified Local Government (CLG), which allows more grant-funding potential. See "Opportunities" below.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Recommendation	Corrective Action Taken	Proposed Completion Date
H) Ensure that HPB members communicate to citizens with civility while assisting with preservation efforts.	<p>In June 2016, the Chair of the HPB held a workshop with the board members to discuss civility and communication. In August 2016, Staff held a Board training workshop with the State CLG coordinator. Items discussed included: Civility and respect for property owner, legal basis for decision-making (evidence not personal bias, use of guidelines), and procedural due process. In January 2015 and January 2017, the City attorney provided legal training to the Board, including information on clear communication and the Sunshine Laws.</p> <p>At the HPB meeting, the Chair makes an announcement regarding meeting etiquette and the rules of a citizen board, to ensure civil communication during the review process. When new members are appointed to the HPB, the Staff meets with them to review the rules, guidelines and ensure an understanding of process and communication. The HPB members are also given the Advisory Board Participation Handbook.</p>	Ongoing



### Mapping

In early 2015, Staff conducted an in-house audit of the historic district maps after discovering discrepancies in the maps. The audit showed that mapping errors had occurred when the maps were switched to the current GIS system. The five district maps were compared to their original historic district ordinance maps and all discrepancies were researched to determine whether they were approved

changes or scrivener's errors that occurred during the system update. The historic district maps have been verified and updated, and the interactive maps have been placed on the Planning Department's website. In 2015, Staff began tracking map updates and will continue to use a standardized process for regular updates for items such as: status change between non-contributing and contributing, boundary updates, and inclusion of a property on the National Register. The maps will be updated will be at least once per year and released to the public in the form of the interactive map.

A separate layer is being added to the interactive maps to include all properties within the City that have a Florida Master Site File (FMSF) on record with the State. The FMSF is a survey form required by the State for a structure to be designated as historic. The State has over 2,200 forms for the City. Staff is currently working to coordinate our ERLA survey FMSF with the State's FMSF to ensure all are on record. Staff and the public will be able to look up addresses to determine if there is a FMSF on record. An FMSF is part of the requirement for setting a 90-day demolition delay on a property. Staff coordination of the ERLA survey, State FMSF and the map update will be complete by Summer 2018, in conjunction with our DHR grant project. Citizen access to the interactive maps is straight-forward: any address can be entered into the map for determining historic district, contributing status, and National Register listing. Future goals include providing FMSF information and a link to the FMSF PDF, as well as a story mapping project for historic districts, including photographs and cultural and historic information about the properties. This could be a potential grant application or project for interns.

Staff is working with the Alachua County Property Appraiser's (ACPA) office to incorporate historic district data in their website parcel information. The ACPA is investigating how to incorporate the information and will continue to work with us. We expect to complete the project by December 2017. Bill Warriner, realtor and HPB member, has stated he would like to have outreach to the local Real Estate Agents to ensure that they know if a building they are listing is in a historic district. Once the interactive mapping is setup, a brochure or a press release email will be developed and distributed to the realtors with instructions for using.





**Division of Historic Resources (DHR) Grant**

The Historic Preservation division has received a small-matching grant from the State Division of Historic Resources (DHR) in the amount of \$14,150, and a Federal Certified Local Government (CLG) grant for \$26,450. The \$40,600 grant funding runs from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. The grant enables a partnership between the City, the University of Florida's historic preservation program (UFHP), and local non-profit Gainesville Modern for a survey of mid-century neighborhoods, a re-assessment of "non-contributing" mid-century buildings in the existing historic districts and updating the Design Guidelines to include mid-century materials and sustainability.

We are currently finalizing the contracts with the State and the University of Florida, have created the first press release and have setup a webpage for dissemination of our findings throughout the year. We will be coordinating with UFHP for linkages between our websites. Reporting to the State is required in October, January, April and June. Media press releases and website updates will occur in tandem with the State reporting dates.

The team will also hold three public meetings: a kick-off meeting in October, a mid-project meeting in February, and a final presentation at the end of April. Our survey will be accomplished by graduate assistants and students from UFHP, as well as volunteers from local mid-century neighborhoods. We are currently working on developing training materials for our survey volunteers and will be hosting survey opportunities in different neighborhoods throughout the grant period. The grant is a clear opportunity for community outreach, for hands-on education about the historic, cultural and architectural value of Gainesville's neighborhoods, and for a chance to build a strong, personal relationship with our citizens.

The DHR grant application is highly competitive. We are proud to note that we were ranked 8 out of 71 for the small-matching historic preservation grants and 3 out of 3 for CLG applications (this ranking appears to be in order of amount requested from highest to lowest).



The Weill-Cassisi house was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2015.

**Opportunities for Grant Funding**

Grant funding for historic preservation is typically divided into two project types: 1) preservation planning, survey, and education/ interpretation 2) intervention projects involving the physical preservation/ restoration of a building. Our opportunities for grant funding lie within the first type, as community outreach and education is critical for maintaining support of our historic preservation program. Below are potential projects on our work plan that could be accomplished with grant funding.

-Story mapping: The story mapping project is an opportunity to use data and maps to tell a narrative about our historic neighborhoods. This project was started in 2015 with volunteer students from UF. The project includes photographing all buildings within the five historic districts and writing text about the architectural, historical and cultural significance of each building. The story map will be created in the interactive mapping system and will include the photo and FMSF file for each property. Northeast and Pleasant Street have been photographed and FMSF gathered. A second phase of this project could involve story mapping for the mid-century neighborhoods surveyed through the DHR grant.

-Historic District entry signage: The City's historic districts do not have a standardized set of signage acknowledging entry points into the neighborhoods. Adding signs creates an educational opportunity for City residents and a marketing opportunity for the City's historic preservation program. The signs would also help developers/ potential buyers understand that the neighborhood has historic status and is regulated by the City. Staff has developed a schematic work plan for the project.

-National Register Historic Districts: Three of our historic districts, Southeast, Pleasant Street, and Northeast, have achieved designation both locally and on the National Register of Historic Places. The University Heights Historic Districts are currently only designated locally. Completing the process to get the University Heights Districts nominated for induction to the National Register would make the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit available to those developers who develop in the district by incorporating the historic contributing structures into their development plans.

-Education for Realtors, Architects and Builders: The Historic Preservation division receives numerous inquiries from realtors regarding local designation and regulation. With the assistance of a grant from the Gainesville- Alachua County Association of Realtors (GACAR), Staff can develop a series of "lunch and learn" information sessions for local realtors, the Chamber of Commerce, the Builders Association and the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects. These sessions would introduce the historic districts, their significance and the process for working on a building in the district. Not only would the sessions be educational, they would provide an opportunity for face-to-face meeting with future applicants.

**Pleasant Street Historic Stabilization Fund**

This fund was created to help stabilize residences in the Pleasant Street Historic District that are in jeopardy of being lost to neglect. The City Commission allocated \$30,000 to be used as a grant program, in which the homeowner can apply for up to \$5,000 in matching funds for exterior work that will stabilize the structure. The home must be occupied as a residence in order for the loan to be forgiven after 8 years, or the owner has to pay back a pro-rated portion based on how long the house is occupied. Priority is given to homes on the Code Enforcement Departments Violation List. When the program was launched in September 2015, letters were mailed out to those property owners on that list and Staff attended the Pleasant Street Neighborhood Association meetings to promote the program with brochures and applications. One of the concerns that the residents expressed was that they did not have the matching funds to utilize the program, although many of them had repairs that would qualify. Staff will need to re-evaluate the program requirements in order to make effective use of the funding.



516 and 520 NW 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
(Pleasant Street historic District)  
were demolished due to  
abandonment and neglect.

**3. Historic Preservation Board/ Petitions Tracking**

The City of Gainesville adopted the Historic Preservation/Conservation Ordinance in 1983, creating the Historic Preservation Board and establishing the Local Register of Historic Places to protect over 1,500 historic structures. There are currently five residential historic districts listed on the Local Register of Historic Places and under the purview of the Historic Preservation Board: Northeast (est. 1985, 627 structures), Southeast (est. 1989, 120 structures), Pleasant Street (est. 1991, 216 structures), University Heights-North (est. 2002, 180 structures) and University Heights-South (est. 2002, 200 structures).

The Historic Preservation Board is the designated advisory body for guiding the public on preservation matters within Gainesville’s historic districts. Board members include architects, real estate brokers, contractors, or others interested in historic preservation. The Board meets monthly in the City Commission auditorium to review petitions for Certificates of Appropriateness (COA), which applies to exterior alteration and new construction in the historic districts. The Historic Preservation Board also reviews applications for demolition and relocation of historic structures and interior changes if the applicant is applying for the ad valorem property tax exemption with their Certificate of Appropriateness. Certificates of Appropriateness can also be reviewed by Staff, if the work is listed in the ordinance and design guidelines as such.

All petitions that come to the Historic Preservation division are assigned a petition number, for example HP-16-43, with HP signifying a Historic Preservation petition, 16 representing the year 2016, and 43 representing the 43<sup>rd</sup> petition of the year. Though petitions are labeled by calendar year for ease of scheduling the monthly Board meetings, reporting of petitions (as follows) is done by the City’s fiscal year, October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017.

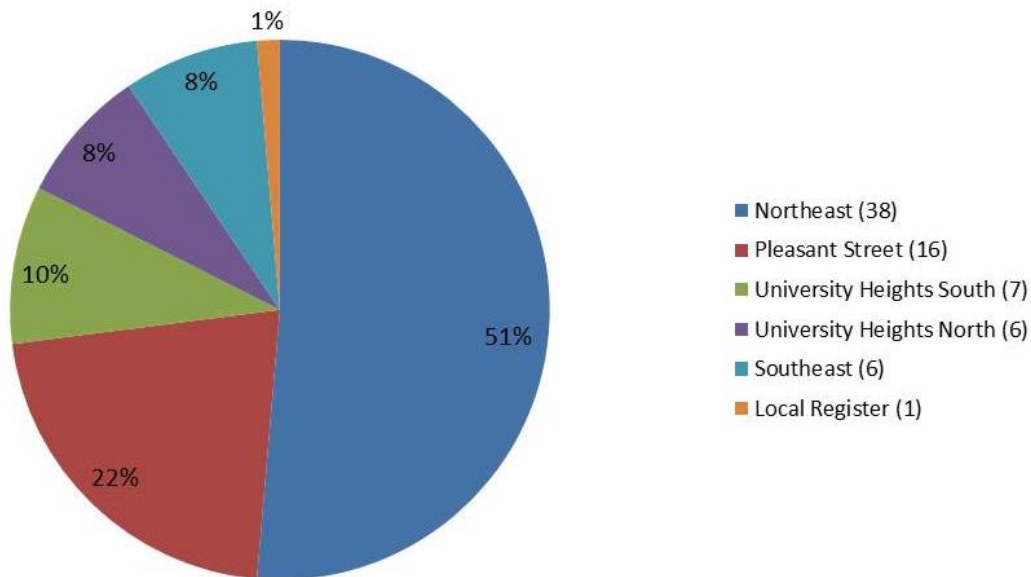
### **Petition Tracking**

A total of 74 petitions were created in the Innoprise system. Of these, 70% were reviewed at Staff level, while 30% required Board review.

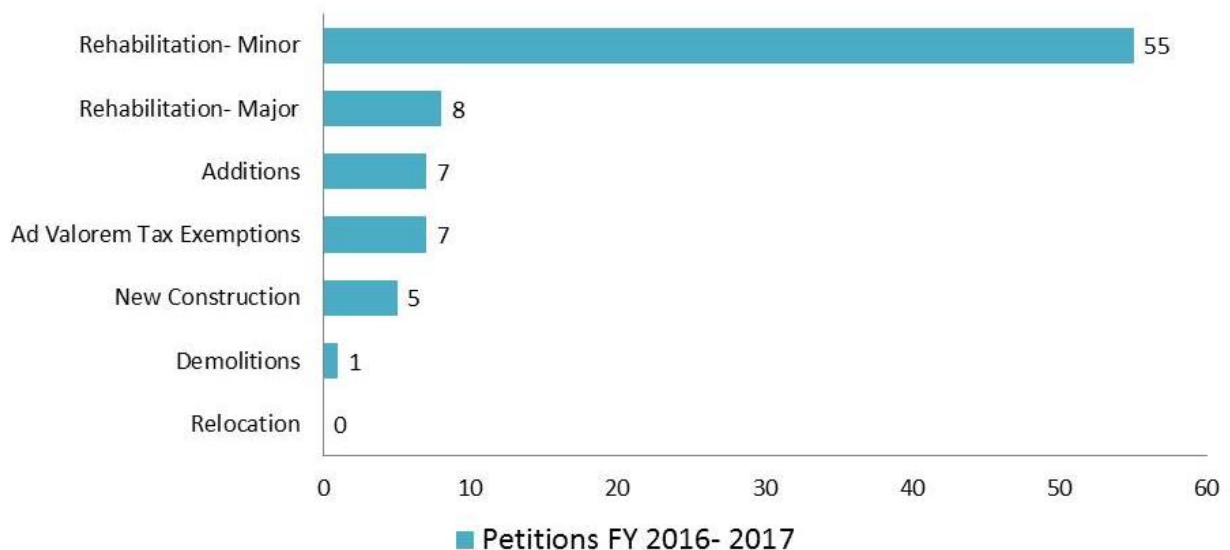


Gainesville has five historic districts of varying sizes (in order from largest to smallest): Northeast, Pleasant Street, University Heights North, University Heights South, and Southeast. Of note, multiple petition numbers can be for the same property or project.

Petitions by Historic District FY 2016- 2017

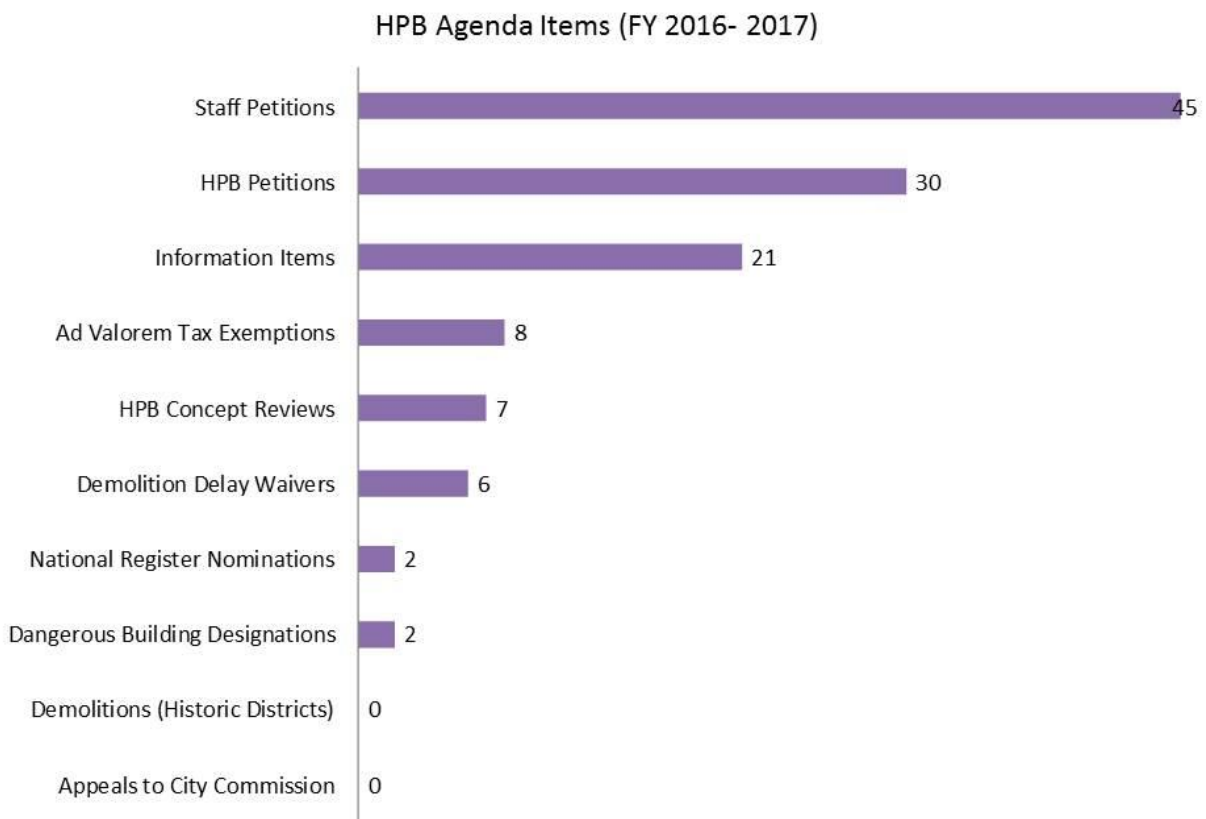


The majority of petitions were for minor rehabilitations, followed by major rehabilitations, new construction, additions and new constructions. Minor rehabilitation includes work such as fencing, solar panels, pool enclosures, re-roofing, material repair or spot replacement, and window and door replacement. New construction includes accessory structures. Demolitions may be an entire structure, a piece of a structure for a new addition, or an accessory structure. We are pleased to report continued and increased use of the financial incentive Ad Valorem property tax exemption for certified rehabilitation projects.





A breakdown of the HPB Agenda for the months of October 2016 through September 2017 reveals the types of items that applicants bring before the Board. In addition to the Staff and Board reviewed COA, the Board hears applications for Ad Valorem property tax exemptions, will provide a preliminary and informal review of future projects (“concept reviews”), can offer a waiver of the 90-day demolition delay automatically placed on any historic building outside of the historic district, reviews National Register nominations and makes recommendations for them to the State. The Board also works with the Building Department to hear their recommendations on Dangerous Building Designations. Lastly, Staff makes use of Information Items to keep the board informed of projects of interest, such as in-house work for ordinance updates and grant applications or, most recently, a presentation by the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) for a Heritage Trail in the historic neighborhoods of Fifth Avenue and Pleasant Street.



## **4. Process Improvements**

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### **Demolition By Neglect**

Staff is working with Code Enforcement Department on evaluating the maintenance codes and brainstorming on methods to prevent demolition by neglect, specifically in the Pleasant Street Historic District. Historic Preservation and Code Enforcement staff have regular communication regarding the violations list and tracking violation response in historic districts. Staff can also coordinate with the Building Department to pro-actively investigate buildings on the violation list before the building reaches a “dangerous building.” This item is ongoing.

### **City Code of Ordinances Sec.6-19: Waiting period for certain demolition permits**

Sec. 6-19 of the City Code of Ordinances allows the Historic Preservation Staff to put a ninety-day delay on demolition permits for buildings that are 45 years or older and/or have a FMSF on record. The applicant is allowed to come before the Historic Preservation Board to request a waiver of the delay. The ordinance section lists the criteria for the board’s decision-making, however, the process of applicant submission was not clear to Historic Preservation Board members or to Staff, leading to confusion about required timing of reviews. Staff will make recommendations for updating the text during the next ordinance review. Staff made a presentation about the existing ordinance to the Historic Preservation Board and clarified the process and timing that Staff will undertake for a thorough review of applications and for clear communication to the applicant regarding timing of review. This process has been added to the Planning Department’s sufficiency checklist in an effort to be proactive with applicants about the timing of review.

### **City Code of Ordinances Sec.30-112: Historic Preservation/ Conservation**

Staff and the City Attorney clarified language in the Historic Preservation Ordinance for the Land Development Code update, which is on-track for approval in September 2017.

### **Clear citizen communication**

Staff continues to focus on providing clearer communication by:

- commencing a re-design of our webpage
- creating a handout, “Guidance for Residents of Historic Districts”
- standardized the format of our Staff Reports and Power Point presentations
- making site visits to review a project with the applicant
- using Innoprise for tracking of petitions
- using Project Dox to coordinate reviews with the Building Department and Code Enforcement

## **5. Staff Activities**

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### **Community Outreach**

In January 2016, we held a Pleasant Street Neighborhood Community Workshop to bring awareness to various resources and services available to residents, such as painting, housing, and the GRU LEEP program.

In April 2017, Historic Preservation staff partnered with other city departments, the University of Florida Student Government, and Trimark Properties to organize a community cleanup within the Porters and Pleasant Street neighborhoods as part of The Big Event community outreach. This will likely be an annual or bi-annual event.



### **Certified Local Government Training**

In April 2017, we hosted a two-day regional training session at the Thomas Center Spanish Court. Commissioner Hayes-Santos provided a gracious welcome to close to forty attendees from CLGs throughout the region. Staff and HPB members provided walking tours of our historic districts and held a reception at the historic home of HPB member Ann Stacy. In addition to receiving training regarding historic preservation activities, we considered this an opportunity to bring visitors to Gainesville and provide a boost to the local economy. Staff worked with the City's Department of Cultural Affairs on coordinating the logistics of the training at the Thomas Center and also worked with Visit Gainesville to provide brochures and maps for our guests.



**Project Support/ Advisement/Community Advocacy Support**

Staff not only reviews formal petitions for Certificate of Appropriateness applications, but is also pleased to provide consultation and support on projects that are not yet to the application phase or just need some preservation or architectural advice. We have been working with the project manager and curator on the public lobby re-design of Thomas Center B, including writing history text and designing layouts for educational displays installed for the grand opening. We are currently working with the Pleasant Street Historical Society and their architect and engineer on the grant-funded adaptive re-use of the Smith-Griffin House. We have also offered advisement to the Department of Parks and Recreation for a historic grant application for the Hartman House renovation, to Cultural Affairs for signage at the Hippodrome, a local developer for potential adaptive reuse of the First Baptist Church of Gainesville, and to the CRA for the Fifth Avenue Pleasant Street Heritage Trail Project.

Staff will represent the Department of Doing on two steering committees for the UF Strategic Development Plan's "Civic Squares" project. The committees will meet 3-4 times between June-December 2017.

Staff also anticipates more work with UF and local neighborhood and advocacy groups as the UF Strategic Plan is implemented and the DHR grant begins. Additionally, Gainesville has recently been listed on the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation's *11 to Save* program, presenting an opportunity for discussions with our citizens and leadership about the future of the physical and historic fabric of our City.



A newly restored house in the Pleasant Street Historic District made use of the Ad Valorem tax exemption for certified rehabilitation.

**6. Annual Budget**

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**FY2017 Budget: \$1,500**

Budget Item	Expense
<b>CLG Training Workshop - April 2017</b>	
Food	\$289.40
<b>2017 Fla Historic Preservation Conference - May 2017</b>	
Bill Warinner	\$362.52
<b>Memberships</b>	
National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (NAPC) - Nov 2016	\$150.00
Fla Trust for Historic Preservation (FTHP)- May 2017	\$75.00
National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP_ - June 2017	\$250.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1,126.92</b>

The following workshops were charged to Planning's 2017 budget:

1. Bill Warinner and Jay Reeves went to the Historic Preservation workshop that was in St. Augustine
2. Danielle Masse and Bill Warinner went to Planning Official workshop that took place in the Thomas Center Long Gallery

**FY2018 Requested Budget: \$1,500****Historic Preservation Staff****Andrew Persons**, Planner IV

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