



A PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

BRAD SCHIDE, PRESERVATION CONNECTICUT

WHAT IS A PRESERVATION ORDINANCE?

Public Act 13-181 authorizes any municipality to:

“Protect the historic and architectural character of properties or districts that are listed on or under consideration for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or the State Register of Historic Places”

Through this enabling state act, local towns and cities have the authority to set up local preservation commissions by ordinance to protect historic structures and landscapes. Boundaries for the regulated area would be included in the ordinance.

A model ordinance from Preservation Connecticut or Hartford’s, Milford’s and New Britain’s actual ordinances are available on-line.

■ Goals of the Preservation Ordinance:

- 1. Research, documentation and public recognition of historic assets in a community;*
- 2. Close collaboration with municipal boards and agencies in recognizing the value of preservation;*
- 3. Regulatory reviews for significant exterior alteration or demolition of historic properties.*

The ordinance can be shaped and customized to suit the needs of the municipality. Meetings with property owners and local officials affected by the action are strongly encouraged.



REGULATORY RESPONSIBILITIES OF A PRESERVATION COMMISSION

- All properties located in a regulated area would need to seek approval from the Commission for any demolition or building permit.
- An alteration is eligible to be reviewed by the Commission if the proposed change is visible from the public way.
- Any demolition of a protected property needs to be approved by the Commission.
- The Commission would have the authority to review buildings to be newly constructed on vacant lots in a regulated area.
- The Commission would adopt the “Secretary of Interior Standards” as a review guide or adopt its own design standards for a specific regulated area. The goal is to provide clarification on what will be approved by the Commission so that the owner can plan accordingly.
- The Commission is not a vehicle to stop the entire development; its role is to work with a developer to meet the design standards and seek a feasible alternative that permits the developer to move forward and saves the historic resource.
- You will not get the City support for an ordinance if your goal is to simply “save” all buildings. You must work with the City and building owner to find a way to incorporate a structure into a project or assist in finding ways to assist the owner in rehabbing the property. **THIS IS ABOUT ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY, NOT JUST HISTORY.** Pre application meetings with City staff, the Commission and the building owner are strongly advised.



95 AND 97-99 HOWE STREET

- With a Preservation Ordinance in place, final approval of this site and building plan would have been reviewed by the Commission for “Suitability”.
- Commission would have reviewed the plan for a “feasible and prudent” alternative to the proposed demolition of both properties. In this instance we sought to maintain the same number of residential units the developer initially sought to maintain economic viability.
- If the Commission was in place, there would have been no need for the State Attorney General intervention.