



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:15-2632

Agenda Item Number: 12.

Agenda Date: 4/15/2015

In Control: Governance Committee

DEPARTMENT: Office of Historic Preservation

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Shanon Miller

SUBJECT:

Potential amendments to the Unified Development Code relating to historic district designation and removing penalties associated with demolition by neglect cases

SUMMARY:

District 2 Councilman Alan Warrick has submitted a City Council Resolution to amend the process for initiating a new historic district and to remove penalties associated with the demolition of historic properties. These changes will require an amendment to Article 6, Sections 35-605 and 35-615, of the Unified Development Code (UDC)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The current designation process outlined in UDC Section 35-605 was changed by City Council in December 2012. Under the current historic designation process, once the City receives an application for an eligible historic district, the City conducts an informational meeting for all owners in the potential historic district. The proponents must submit a petition demonstrating support from owners of at least 30 percent of the properties within the proposed district boundary in order to initiate the public hearing process. The application shall remain valid for two years. Once the petition is verified, the City initiates the public hearing process at the Historic and Design Review Commission, the Zoning Commission, and the City Council. Ultimately, historic designation is a zoning change, which is a decision under the purview of the Mayor and City Council exclusively.

The three changes proposed to Section 35-605 would amend the percentage of owner support required to initiate the public hearing process to 51%, require the City to facilitate the voting process, and change the

length of time during which an application will remain valid to one year.

The fourth proposed change would amend UDC Section 35-615, which outlines penalties for historic buildings that are demolished as a public safety hazard. Currently, if a historic building is found to be in violation and is demolished, then no application for a permit for a project on the property may be considered for a period of five years from the date of demolition of the building or structure. Councilman Warrick proposes to remove the five-year penalty.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Governance Committee refer this item to the Infrastructure and Growth Committee for consideration.