



Legislation Text

File #: ID#19-905, **Version:** 1

AGENDA CAPTION:

Hold discussion regarding Historic Preservation Commission Recommendation Resolution 2020-01RR to consider the Commission's proposal to amend the qualifications for membership on the Historic Preservation Commission, and provide direction to Staff.

Meeting date: February 4, 2020

Department: City Clerk / Planning and Development Services

Amount & Source of Funding

Funds Required: N/A

Account Number: N/A

Funds Available: N/A

Account Name: N/A

Fiscal Note:

Prior Council Action: N/A

City Council Strategic Initiative:

N/A

Comprehensive Plan Element (s):

- ☐ Economic Development
- ☐ Environment & Resource Protection
- ☐ Land Use
- ☐ Neighborhoods & Housing
- ☐ Parks, Public Spaces & Facilities
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Core Services
- ☒ Not Applicable

Master Plan:

N/A

Background Information:

Per Section 2.191 of the City Code and Article 3(C) of the Commission bylaws, the Historic Preservation Commission shall consist of seven members appointed by the City Council. The composition of the Commission is as follows:

1. Two members shall be residents of the City, or shall be employed in the City.
2. Two members shall be citizens of the City with a demonstrated interest in the history of the City of San Marcos.
3. Two members shall be property owners or residents from one of the Historic Districts designated in the Development Code, other than the downtown Historic District. The city council shall endeavor to rotate appointments evenly among the districts.
4. One member shall be a property owner, business owner, or resident of the downtown Historic District.
5. If possible, at least two members shall be from the disciplines of architecture, history, archaeology, or other disciplines related to historic preservation.

The Commission's composition was set in 1984 when the Historic Preservation Commission was codified. The role that has been most challenging to fill has been that of the Downtown Historic District representative. The Commission has discussed the difficulty that is presented in filling this role on multiple occasions.

In January 2019, staff spoke with the CLG Coordinator at the time, Madeline Clites, on how the City could amend the composition of the structure to widen the pool of applicants for the Commission while keeping within the requirements of the CLG program. The CLG program does dictate that all commissioners have a knowledge and interest in historic preservation and that *"at least 60% of the commission membership shall be drawn from the preservation-related professions defined by the National Park Service. These professions include Architecture, History, Architectural History, Planning, Prehistoric and Historic Archeology, Folklore, Cultural Anthropology, Curation, Conservation, and Landscape Architecture."* This requirement comes directly from the NPS; however, there is some flexibility if the CLG shows evidence of at least attempting to fill the positions with preservation-related professionals. Staff does not recommend adding this language into the code since it will then require the City to meet these strict standards rather than aspire to the standards and explaining to the THC why the City was unable to meet them.

She further explained that the language in the ordinance regarding the composition of the Commission needs to be specific enough so that the City is close to meeting CLG requirements, yet flexible enough that

appointments can be made without too much headache. She stated that the City can argue that efforts are being made to meet the CLG requirements and that amending the bylaws and City Code to meet CLG requirements was not necessary. In speaking with her, she explained how she understood recruiting a commissioner from the Downtown Historic District could be difficult but that it was not 100% necessary to meet CLG requirements. She acknowledged that there was benefit of having downtown representation on the commission.

Council Committee, Board/Commission Action:

The Historic Preservation Commission unanimously approved Recommendation Resolution 2020-01RR at the January 2, 2020 regular meeting.

Alternatives:

N/A

Recommendation: