

Protocols for Historical Review of Municipally Owned or Funded Projects

I. General

The Springfield Historical Commission ("Commission") shall be provided an opportunity to conduct timely and effective reviews and to discuss concepts, initiatives, plans or specifications that will effect municipally owned or funded projects involving buildings constructed prior to 1950. The protocol for tax title properties is described separately in Section II.

Before services related to demolition, rehabilitation, reconstruction, or disposition of such buildings built before 1950 (other than tax title properties) are secured, the Department responsible for the project shall notify the Commission and provide the following information:

- Address of building.
- Department name, contact person, address, email, and telephone number.
- Description of proposed demolition, rehabilitation, reconstruction, or disposition.
- Whether the City owns the building or is funding a project related to the building.
- The year the building was constructed.

At the next scheduled Commission meeting, but no later than thirty (30) days after receipt of a notification, the Commission shall meet to determine whether such building is historically significant and whether the proposed activity will have an adverse effect on the building.

In determining building significance, the Commission may consider:

- historical or architectural importance in terms of period, style, method of building construction or association with a recognized architect or builder; or
- listing on the National Register of Historic Places; or
- eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

At the meeting, the Commission may receive comments from the Department, abutters, neighborhood association, and other residents of the city. If the Commission determines that the building is significant and that the proposed activity will adversely affect the building, the Commission shall offer recommendations to the Department to eliminate, minimize, or mitigate the adverse effect.

If the Commission determines either that (a) the building is not significant, or (b) that the building is significant, but the proposed activity will not adversely affect the building, the Commission shall notify the Department in writing, and no further action is needed.

If the Department proposes to modify the activity as a result of the recommendations, the Commission shall determine if the modification eliminates, minimizes, or mitigates the adverse effect and so notify the Department in writing. If the Commission determines the proposed modified activity satisfactorily eliminates, minimizes, or mitigates the adverse effect, no further action shall be required. If the Commission determines that the proposed modified activity does not eliminate, minimize, or mitigate the adverse effect, or if information is submitted by the Department indicating modifications, as proposed, cannot be made, the Commission will notify the Department in writing that an agreement could not be reached.

This protocol shall not apply to ordinary repairs and maintenance on City-owned or City-funded buildings, whether routine or emergency.

II. Tax Title Properties:

Tax Title Dispositions:

The Department will provide the Commission with advance notification of dispositions, including auctions and/or RFP transfers.

Tax Title Demolitions*:

In non-emergency cases, the Department will provide the Commission with sixty (60) days prior notice: (a) of the addresses of the properties sought to be demolished, (b) whether the properties are City-owned, and (c) whether there is a court order for demolition.

*Nothing in this review shall be deemed to inhibit the Building Commissioners or Fire Commissioners ability to demolish buildings under M.G.L. c.48, M.G.L. c. 143 § 6-9 and the Massachusetts Building Code. Further, nothing in this review shall be deemed to inhibit the Law Department's ability to seek and enforce a court demolition order, provided the Law Department and/or the Office of Housing provides the Commission with notice upon filling a motion to demolish a building not less than sixty (60) days prior to demolition.