

Chamber Supporting City's Efforts to Make Historic Regulations More Effective

The City of Pleasanton has formed a Historic Preservation Task Force to review existing historical preservation requirements, and recommend improvements to the current regulations. The Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce is in support of the City's efforts to make the historic regulations more effective and coherent.

In the 1980's the Chamber of Commerce led an early study (funded by the City) to identify historic buildings of merit in the downtown, and analyze the architecture that gives downtown Pleasanton its special excitement. The study concluded that there is no one dominant building type, or era specific architecture that gives downtown its character: Downtown acquired its special feel based on the diversity of different architectural styles and quality buildings from many eras.

Since then, through a series of actions including the Downtown Specific Plan, Downtown Design Guidelines, the newly adopted General



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Plan, expanded design review requirements, and environmental quality act standards, more and more historical regulations have accumulated. The Historic Preservation Task Force can help coordinate and make sense of these overlapping and sometimes inconsistent historical mandates. One of the Chamber's goals will be to simplify the historic review-process for building renovations, so property owners can know in advance what rules will be applied to their building renovations. The rehabilitation of the Kolln Hardware Building preserved a keystone piece of the downtown's character, probably for another 100 years. But the process of determining what rules for historic preservation would apply took over a year, and jeopardized the much needed renovation.

Particularly within the business district, historic preservation needs to embrace adaptive reuse and upgrade of historic structures. An example of successful adaptive reuse is the Firehouse Arts Center, in which the old firehouse was restored and preserved, while its use was updated to be part of vital expansion of the arts in downtown.

The City has a link to all the

Historic Preservation Task Force materials and agendas right on its home page. If your property may be affected by the streamlining of the historic regulations, you are encouraged to follow this Task Force closely, and communicate with the Chamber of Commerce, the Pleasanton Downtown Association, and the City regarding your thoughts and preferences.

Do you think all buildings of a certain age should be designated historic and preserved? What about ugly or just ordinary buildings? What age? Fifty years - built before 1963? Built before World War II (1939)?

- Do you think the entire Downtown Specific Plan Area should be designated a Historic District?
- How will all of this affect downtown property owners who want to make improvements to their properties?
- How will all of this affect downtown vitality?

Please inform yourself and let us know what you think.

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