

The first Historic Conservation Working Group meeting was held on May 11, 2010 in Centennial Plaza Two. The discussion centered on requests for information that the Working Group feels is necessary to make quality recommendations. The Working Group also came to the meeting with several suggestions and knowledge of the issues related to Cincinnati's Historic Conservation. There were two main issues that the Working Group discussed: how to preserve historic resources, and what counts as a historic resource. Several comments also dealt with issues in Historic Conservation, or themes that the group must consider when making recommendations.

The group suggested three basic methods of conserving historical resources. Direct funding and other incentives can help to motivate conservation instead of demolition of buildings and other resources. Where regulations do not include design standards, incentives can motivate developers to preserve historic resources. Another method of promoting conservation is to pass regulations that provide aesthetic or structural standards requiring developers to preserve the historic quality of a neighborhood. Also, some of the existing regulations contain loopholes, according to one Working Group member, that make them less effective. One comment mentioned a tiered regulatory system that the Working Group will discuss further in other meetings. Finally, the group discussed education as a method of promoting historic conservation. Education of local history and architectural significance illuminate the value of preserving historic resources.

The City currently has a policy describing what qualifies as a historic resource. The Working Group discussed several ways in which the policy could improve by expanding the definition. Specific comments mentioned historic urban design, parks, parkways, buildings, and the interiors of buildings. Working Group members suggested that it might be worthwhile to consider architectural/historic significance prior to the 50-year benchmark that the City currently uses. Historic Conservation should promote preservation of the particular character of Cincinnati as a whole or the neighborhood. This Working Group will work to define that character and which qualities count as historic.

*Historic Conservation Working Group Meeting #1 Summary
Two Centennial Plaza, May 11, 2010*

There are several issues that the working group must consider in addition to what counts as an historic resource and how to preserve those resources. These issues deal with the external factors that surround historic conservation policies. They include economic, fiscal, environmental, aesthetic, and development issues. For example, some Historic Conservation regulations add a layer of complication and expense to developers in historic districts. Rehabbing historic buildings might have a positive effect on the natural environment as compared to a brand new development. The Working Group discussed both of these issues and possibilities to take advantage of these interdisciplinary connections.