

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN HAVANA BUILDING DESIGN STANDARDS & ORDINANCES

The Town Council on June 6, 2021 adopted Building Design Standards and Ordinances for a newly defined Central Business District, CBD. Attached is a map of the district and the standards and ordinances that have been adopted.

These new regulations are based on guidance included in the Downtown Havana Master Plan. In 2017, this plan was created through a series of community workshops. Among the major tenets of the plan was the Community's vision to preserve and protect downtown's historic character and buildings. The plan was presented to the Town and following public hearings was adopted. Subsequently, in 2020, the Town was awarded by the State Department of Economic Opportunity a grant to develop Standards and Ordinances for downtown Havana. Since then, the Town, Havana Main Street, HMS and the Appalachian Regional Planning Council have worked together to finalize the new regulations. Prior to adoption, the Town conducted public workshops and hearings for community input. This input resulted in numerous changes being made to the original proposal; attached is the final product.

The mission of HMS is to revitalize the economy of downtown Havana and preserve its historic character. Without the adoption and enforcement of building design standards and ordinances, the probability of fulfillment of our mission is very doubtful. We cannot compete with the internet, big box stores, malls etc. without the creation of a unique and appealing downtown district. To be competitive, we have to attract visitors and investors. Also, we want a downtown that our community can be proud to call their own.

The attached document is extensive (36 pgs.). HMS has written a three page outline (also attached) of what it contains. The outline is not intended to replace the complete set of standards and ordinances but will allow you to view its main topics and to focus on your areas of interest.

BUILDING DESIGN STANDARDS & ORDINANCES OUTLINE

SECTIONS:

ZONING DISTRICT MAP, PG 1

Purpose- Map of the Central Business District, CBD
See attached map.

General Description of CBD boundaries

Railroad tracks on downtown's West side from 9th Ave to 5th Ave; Northside of 9th Ave through to the South side of 5th Ave; and 1st St. NE from E 9th Ave to 5th Ave E. (if you are directly on 1st St.NE, you are not in the CBD).

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT PLAN, PGS 2-8

Purpose - To describe the zoning in the new CBD.

CBD Characteristics

- Pedestrian oriented district
- Intended for commercial services, i.e. antiques, gifts, furniture, banks, museums, bakeries. See attached for comprehensive listing.
- Residential allowed on first floor of building utilizing no more than 33% of floor area in back portion of commercial space. Current residences are grandfathered in.
- Residential development encouraged for second floor development.

CBD standards applied:

- Single family residential
- Nonconforming uses of land
- Nonconforming uses of a building

Comments- We have a small downtown footprint. It was developed to service the Shade Tobacco industry. It is pedestrian friendly and ideal for retail and commercial use. It is an excellent location to maintain and build an enticing attraction to draw visitors to Havana. If successful, it will increase our potential to attract visitors and investment enabling us to again become a major economic engine for Havana. During the past ten years there has been a progressive loss of downtown retail to noncommercial uses, i.e. residences, warehouses, churches, etc. If this continues, we will lose a very valuable economic asset.

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT DESIGN STANDARDS, PGS 9-17

Purpose -Standards for use in protecting the historic character of Downtown Havana. It provides for the protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of

historic and other places, i.e. districts, sites, buildings, structures and works of art.

Definitions

The Standards Document includes an extensive Definitions segment. These definitions include Certificate of Appropriateness; demolition by neglect; exterior architectural features; exterior environmental features, historic property and material changes in appearance.

Certificate of Appropriateness

No material change in the appearance of a designated historic structure or surrounding property shall be made by the owner or occupant without the application for a certificate of appropriateness. There are some specific exceptions. The certificate will outline the design and any possible exceptions in the certificate which will be reviewed and approved by the Town Council.

Guidelines and criteria for certificate of appropriateness will apply to:

- New construction
- Alterations, reconstruction and major repairs in historic or non-historic buildings.

Penalty

Violations of this section will result in a fine of not less than \$100 per day.

Comment - This section is extensive. It outlines what is necessary for filing the for the Certificate of Appropriateness. The Standards of Rehabilitation shall be applied keeping in mind the need of the Town to preserve, restore and protect the historic resources of the Town. All work shall be done in a manner that does not detract from the historical or architectural character of the historic district or property.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION DESIGN STANDARDS, PGS 18-33

Purpose - This section focusses on the preservation and protection of our downtown historic buildings and building design.

Definitions

Includes Certificate of Appropriateness; demolition by neglect; exterior architectural features; exterior environmental features; historic district; historic property; material change in appearance.

Penalty

Violations of this section will result in a fine of not less than \$100 per day.

Comment - Again, we want to preserve and protect our Historic Downtown District. We also want to maintain standards that will allow us to file for individual buildings or the entire district to qualify for the National Register of Historic Places. This type of recognition enhances our attractiveness to those desiring to visit historic Florida towns.

OBSTRUCTION OF PAVEMENT OR SIDEWALK, PGS 34-35

Purpose - Maintain the character and pedestrian nature in the CBD. It shall be unlawful for any person to obstruct or injure, in any way or manner, any pavement, curbing or improved sidewalk.

- **Obstructing sidewalks, pavement or area between the sidewalk and curb within the CBD.**

Comments – This section outlines specific requirements for what is/is not allowed in front of businesses. Also, the amount of space (36”) that must be provided for an area of passage for pedestrian movement and ADA accessibility. Again, our objective is to make our downtown as pedestrian friendly and attractive as possible. See the complete document for further details.