



Historical Overview



St. Joseph's only designated National Historic Landmark, the Patee House Hotel, now the Patee House Museum, was completed in 1858 and served as headquarters for the short-lived Pony Express in 1860.

Situated on the bank of the Missouri River in northwest Missouri, St. Joseph is a mid-sized city of approximately 73,000 located approximately fifty miles north of downtown Kansas City, Missouri. Founded as a trading post in 1843 by Joseph Robidoux III, St. Joseph quickly became an outfitting and goods distribution center for settlers heading to western homestead lands and later for “gold rushers” journeying to Colorado and California. By 1859, St. Joseph became the westernmost railroad terminus in the country with the completion of the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad – the first line to cross the State of Missouri. Rail links to the East secured the City’s economic prosperity and by the 1880s St. Joseph was dubbed “Queen City of the West”. A diversity of products ranging from alfalfa feed to pancake flour to writing tablets to art glass were produced here in over 400 factories which flourished through the 1920s. The City was the third largest wholesale dry goods distribution center in volume in the country by the late 1920s as well. Meatpacking became an important industry here at the dawn of the 20th century. Major meatpacking houses were located on the City’s south side including Swift & Company, Armour & Company, Hammond Packing Company, and others. The stockyards flourished, eventually leading the City to rank among the top five markets in the world for hogs, cattle, and sheep by 1900. Such wealth created an impressive and irreplaceable architectural heritage. St. Joseph today boasts

one of Missouri’s largest and most important collections of late 19th and early 20th century architecture.

Organization Of The St. Joseph Landmark Commission



St. Joseph Landmark Commission

The St. Joseph Landmark Commission (Commission) is the City of St. Joseph's only public body charged with monitoring and protecting the City's valuable historic resources. Created in September 1970 under Mayor William Bennett, the Landmark Commission began as an advisory body to the Mayor and City Council on matters relating to the preservation of historic structures throughout the City. Creating awareness about the City's rich legacy of historic properties included the publication of brochures describing such properties and the institution of a bronze plaque program for individual landmarks. Historic preservation became an officially recognized role of city government in 1984 with the incorporation of an historic preservation article in the City's zoning ordinance. Today the Landmark Commission has evolved into a public body that is working diligently to encourage the preservation of entire neighborhoods and districts. Historic resource surveys of older neighborhoods to identify properties and sites of historical and cultural importance and the subsequent designation of National Register-eligible buildings and districts are on-going priorities. Undertaking design review in the City's locally designated historic districts/landmarks is also a primary responsibility of the Commission.



Reorganized under Article III of Chapter 31 of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of St. Joseph, the Landmark Commission is composed of nine (9) members who are appointed by the City Council to serve three (3) year terms. All members reside within the City's corporate limits and have a demonstrated interest, experience, or education in historic preservation, history, architecture, real estate, or related field. The Commission meets on the first Tuesday of every month to review applications for exterior changes to properties within local historic districts. A Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) must be issued by the Landmark Commission before changes can take place. The meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers located on the third floor of City Hall, 1100 Frederick Avenue. A work session is generally held in the Council Chambers forty-five (45) minutes prior to each meeting to discuss issues relevant to the Landmark Commission's scope of concern. Both the general meeting and the work session are open to the public; however, in order to be placed formally on the Commission's agenda, it is necessary to submit an application to the City of St. Joseph Planning and Community Services Department at least twenty (20) days prior to the Commission's regularly scheduled meeting.



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Restoration work is underway at the Joseph Corby mansion, 302 S. 11th Street, Museum Hill Historic District.

Obtaining A Certificate of Appropriateness

In an effort to safeguard the integrity of St. Joseph's locally designated historic districts, all proposed exterior changes to a building and/or site are closely monitored. Certain exterior changes may only occur with the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). COAs may be issued by the Landmark Commission or, in the case of minor works items, the City's Historic Preservation Planner who serves as staff administrator to the Landmark Commission. Upon contemplation of exterior work, contact the Historic Preservation Planner at 816/ 271-4648 to determine if a COA is required. Applications for a COA may be obtained from the Planning and Community Services Department, Room 201, City Hall, 1100 Frederick Avenue, during the regular business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The City's Historic Preservation Planner is available to provide technical assistance in the application process.

Pre-Application Review

Property owners considering projects in locally designated historic districts are encouraged to take full advantage of free technical advice and design assistance prior to the submission of a COA. This pre-review can save delays in the process. Informal meetings to become familiar with the Commission's standards of appropriateness and design may be arranged by contacting the Historic Preservation Planner at the Department of Planning and Community Services. The Historic Preservation Planner can determine if a pre-application review is desired. In general, it is desired for any exterior project involving:

- More than 1,000 square feet of new construction
- \$25,000 or more in exterior-related construction costs



Contractor Ron Petersen repairs the Italianate side porch of the Browne-Craig mansion, 402 S. 12th Street, Museum Hill Historic District.

Pre-application reviews are typically held during the Commission's regularly scheduled work session held forty-five (45) minutes prior to its meeting. Attendance at this meeting by the applicant is strongly encouraged in order to answer any questions commissioners may have regarding the project. The following information is useful for a pre-application review and, if possible, should be submitted to the Department of Planning and Community Services by the applicant fourteen (14) days prior to the work session date:

- 1) Plot plan of site
- 2) Preliminary drawings/ sketches indicating desired changes
- 3) Photographs of existing conditions

After a pre-application review has occurred, the applicant may then submit an application for a COA for formal review by the Landmark Commission.

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St. Joseph Landmark Commission

Completing The Application

After obtaining a COA application from the City of St. Joseph Department of Planning & Community Services, it is important that the form be filled out completely. Proposed changes should be clearly defined and presented in sufficient detail with accompanying photographs, plans, and sketches. These supplementary materials are important in assessing the scope of the proposed project and will help to avoid confusion and expedite the approval process.

Application Submission and Review

Once the COA application has been completed, it, along with all supporting materials, must be returned to the Department of Planning and Community Services at least twenty (20) days prior to the Commission's regularly scheduled meeting in order to be placed on the agenda. There it will be reviewed for compliance with all applicable ordinances and codes. (If zoning requirements are not met, it is the City's policy that the application will not be submitted to the Landmark Commission for consideration.) Applicants should note that additional permits might be required in order to undertake the proposed activity. Upon completion of the zoning review, the Historic Preservation Planner will forward the application to the Landmark Commission for review and action. Notification of the meeting date and time will be sent to the applicant by mail. Newspaper notification in the public notice section of the classified ads will also occur at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting. Attendance at this meeting by the applicant and interested parties is recommended should any questions or concerns regarding the proposed project arise. Any resident of the community is welcome to attend the meeting and to review the application in the office of the Historic Preservation Planner prior to the meeting. The Landmark Commission may approve, approve with conditions, or deny an application for a COA. The Commission must issue or deny a Certificate of Appropriateness within forty-five (45) days after the filing of a complete application, except when the time limit has been extended by mutual agreement between the applicant and the Landmark Commission. Most applications are decided at the initial meeting, followed up by formal mailed notice.



City Hall, 1100 Frederick Avenue,
St. Joseph, Missouri

Serious Economic Hardship Evaluations/Appeals

Should the Landmark Commission deny a Certificate of Appropriateness or place conditions on the approval that the owner believes will impose a serious economic hardship, the applicant may request a special hearing to consider the economic hardship issue specifically. The applicant may request a hearing at the time the denial or conditional approval is granted or submit a letter to the Historic Preservation Planner requesting a special meeting within ten (10) working days from the date the Commission originally took action. Upon such a request, a special economic hardship hearing will be called within ten (10) working days. All information supporting the applicant's claim for economic hardship must be provided to the Department of Planning and



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Serious Economic Hardship Evaluations/Appeals continued

Community Services at least five (5) working days before the special hearing. A representative from the City Attorney's Office will review the case and be present at the hearing. The applicant will be required to present clear, factual proof of the serious economic hardship claim. The burden is on the applicant to prove this claim.

Information submitted to the Commission to support a serious economic hardship claim may include, but is not limited to, a pro forma analysis of rehabilitation, business prospectus, financial and bank records related to the property, insurance payments on the property, rental history, information on advertisement for sale and offers made in the case of properties that have been marketed for sale, and/or other pertinent information. In cases where the Landmark Commission determines by a majority vote that a serious economic hardship is created by cause of the denial or conditional approval of the Certificate, it shall issue a Certificate of Hardship. The Certificate may include conditions to reduce the serious economic hardship, but does not have to eliminate all economic impact. Written notice of the decision shall be sent to the applicant.

The Landmark Commission's decision on the claim of serious economic hardship may be appealed to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. The Board of Adjustment may, upon a finding of serious economic hardship, remand the case back to the Landmark Commission for further consideration. It should also be noted that appeals to the Board of Adjustment may be taken on the grounds that the Landmark Commission has erred procedurally. It is not the role of the Board of Adjustment to re-evaluate the merits of an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness based on design issues and compliance with the Landmark Commission's guidelines. Rather, in cases where the Board of Adjustment determines that the Landmark Commission has not followed its rules and applied its guidelines, it shall remand the case back to the Landmark Commission for re-consideration.

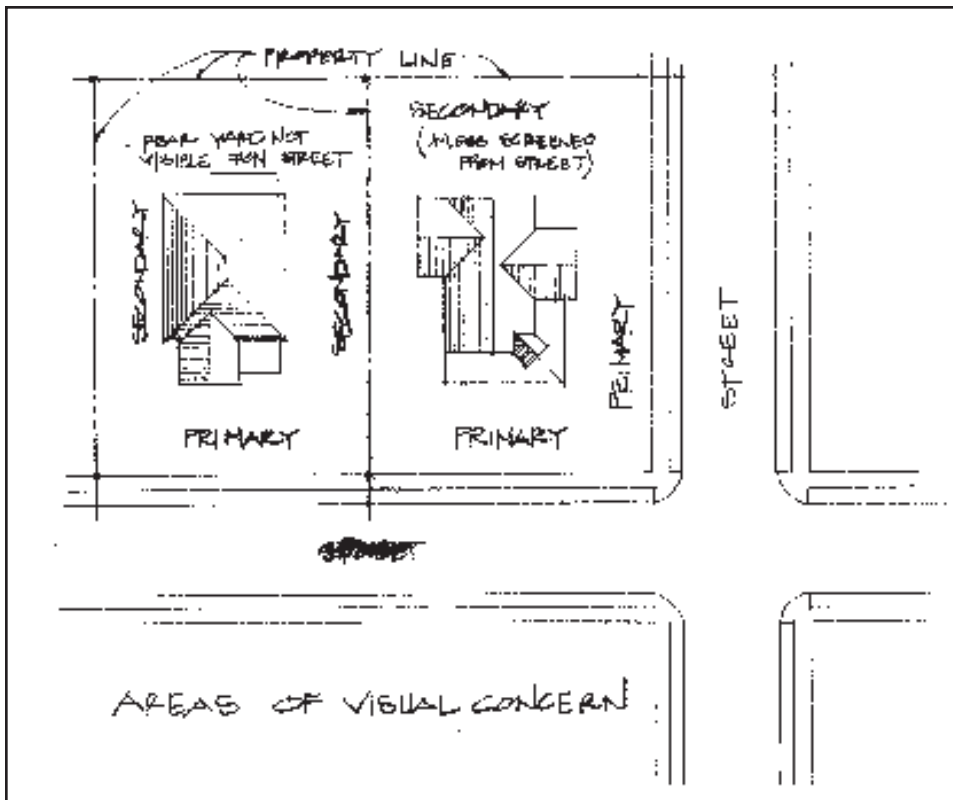
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Evaluation of Exterior Changes

The Landmark Commission's jurisdiction extends over the entire property site. Exterior changes are evaluated in terms of their impact on the property and the surrounding area. Each portion of the property site is divided into *areas of visual concern*. **The most important visual areas are those located adjacent to the street right-of-way and are highly visible from the public view.** Inappropriate changes in these areas can severely alter the character of a building or site and can compromise the integrity of the entire streetscape. Thus, great care is taken to ensure appropriate site development in these areas. **Of secondary importance are those side and rear yard areas that one can view from a public street or sidewalk.** They too play an important role in defining the character of the site because of their visibility from a public street. **Although certain areas of a building or site are not visible from the public right-of-way, attention is given to these areas because of the Landmark Commission's recognition that the integrity of the whole site, not just primary areas, should be maintained.** The possibility also exists that at some point in the future, due to demolition, changes in grade, or other factors, areas not presently visible from the public view will become visible. Hence, it is prudent to apply standards to all areas of the property.

The following illustration depicts the *areas of visual concern*:





Commission Procedures



Removal of asbestos shingles on the 1890 Thomas Rogers house, 913 N. 12th Street, Cathedral Hill Historic District, reveals the original wood siding and decorative detailing. Removal of inappropriate later siding is classified as a 'minor works' item.

Exterior Change Classifications

For administrative purposes, exterior work items are divided into three categories: *normal maintenance and repair*, *minor works*, and *major works*. Normal maintenance and repair of any exterior architectural feature that does not involve a change in material or the design of a building or site does not require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Minor work items include those changes to a property that are judged not to have a significant impact on the property and are consistent with the St. Joseph Landmark Commission's established design guidelines. Minor works items can be approved by the administrator of the Commission following the

submission of an application for a COA.

The following is a list of exterior work items that fall under the **Minor Works** category:

1. Repointing masonry with compatible mortar mixture;
2. Installation of mechanical systems in side and rear yard areas of visual concern where such installation does not result in a major alteration to the building;
3. Installation of patios and sidewalks in side and rear yard areas;
4. Fence and masonry retaining wall installation in side and rear yard areas;
5. Change of roofing materials on flat or low slop roofs not visible from the street;
6. Installation of satellite dishes and skylights in rear yard/roof areas;
7. Removal of incongruous synthetic siding/sheathing where original siding/sheathing exists underneath;
8. Installation of canvas awnings on residential and commercial buildings;
9. Installation of compatible entrance, porch, and walkway lighting;
10. Installation of compatible porch stair railings that match the style and character of existing porch railings;

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Exterior Change Classifications continued

11. Installation of wood or aluminum storm windows with painted finish where the size of the storm window matches the size of the original opening;
12. Demolition of non-contributing accessory buildings;
13. Removal of non-historic fencing and retaining walls;
14. Installation of historic identification markers;
15. Removal of diseased, structurally unsound, inappropriately sited, or dead trees;
16. Tree planting in City rights-of-way with appropriate permits. (Note: Tree, shrubbery, and bulb planting on private property is exempt from regulation.)

Note: This list is not all-inclusive. Other work items that are deemed to have minor impacts may be considered “minor works” items. The Historic Preservation Planner may, at his discretion, forward at any time a minor works item to the Landmark Commission for its review and approval.

Major work items constitute substantial alterations to a building or site such as a large-scale restoration, new construction, and demolition. All major work items must be approved by the Landmark Commission and receive a certificate of appropriateness.

The following pages contain the St. Joseph Landmark Commission’s design guidelines which shall be used in reviewing application requests within locally designated historic districts or with individually designated landmarks. While mandatory review by the Landmark Commission is not required within National Register Historic Districts, property owners are encouraged to utilize the design guidelines when undertaking improvements to their property. Property owners in National Register-listed properties are also welcome and encouraged to take advantage of free technical advice and assistance offered by the Landmark Commission and the City’s Historic Preservation Planner.