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## COUNCIL COMMUNICATION City Manager’s Office

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Agenda Date: 7/26/04  
04-374

Communication No.:

Agenda Item Type: Resolution  
No.:

Roll Call

Submitted by: Larry Hulse, Community Development

**SUBJECT—**

Proposed amendments to the “Architectural Guidelines for New Construction in Des Moines’ Historic Districts” and “Fence Guidelines for Des Moines’ Historic Districts.”

**SYNOPSIS—**

Council is asked to approve amendments to the adopted guidelines used by the Historic Preservation Commission in their review of applications for Certificates of Appropriateness for properties located within local historic districts.

**FISCAL IMPACT—**

none

**RECOMMENDATION—**

Approval

## **BACKGROUND—**

The decisions of the Historic Preservation Commission regarding proposed alterations to structures in Des Moines' Historic Districts are guided by 3 sets of guidelines: *Architectural Guidelines for New Construction in Des Moines' Historic Districts*, *Architectural Guidelines for Rehabilitation in Des Moines' Historic Districts*, and *Fence Guidelines in Des Moines' Historic Districts*. The Historic Preservation Commission recently reviewed their guidelines and identified needed clarifications and updates. The following amendments to the guidelines were adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission at their meeting of September 18, 2003. The *Architectural Guidelines* were then reformatted to a standard 8 ½" x 11" from their smaller, nonstandard format for ease of re-printing, and the graphic layout of the *Fence Guidelines* document was re-designed for consistency with the *Architectural Guidelines*.

The attached pages of the guidelines show the proposed amendments (text strike-through = removal, bold text = addition). A summary is as follows:

### *Architectural Guidelines for New Construction in Des Moines' Historic Districts*

#### *p. 2. (Height)*

~~Height should be measured from grade to eave.~~ **Height is the vertical distance from grade to the average height of the highest surface.**

Note: this definition is now consistent with that used in the City of Des Moines Zoning Ordinance.

### *Fence Guidelines*

#### *p. 2 ("Finished Side")*

**If the property owner desires two post and rail sides, this is acceptable. However, pickets should be placed "back-to-back" rather than alternating (board-on-board or "shadow box").**

#### *p. 3*

##### *1. ("Material, poured concrete.")*

**Some poured concrete replacements may have aggregate. Recovered broken concrete is acceptable.**

##### *2. ("Material, concrete block")*

Smooth concrete blocks and **interlocking** blocks are not recommended.

#### *p. 5 ("Spacing")*

Board on board **"shadow box"** fences are not recommended for historic neighborhoods, **(fences that have pickets that alternate on both sides of the rail, rather than "back-to-back")**

