



October 23, 2020

TO: Bowling Green City Council

FROM: Historic Preservation Commission (John Sampen, Chair; Wil Roudebush, Vice-Chair; Les Barber, Secretary; John Wade

RE: Proposed Historic Preservation Ordinance for Certified Local Government Program Eligibility

The Certified Local Government Program is a preservation partnership among local, state and national governments focused on promoting historic preservation at the grass roots level. The program is jointly administered by the National Park Service and the Ohio Historic Preservation Office, with each local community working through a certification process to become recognized as a Certified Local Government (CLG). CLGs become active partners in the Federal Historic Preservation Program and have access to the grant opportunities it provides. Being a CLG shows Bowling Green's commitment to keeping what is significant from its past for future generations to enjoy.

The number of Ohio cities that are already Certified Local Governments for historic preservation is 77, and the number is growing. Bowling Green is the only city housing one of Ohio's state universities which has yet to join the program. To correct that situation, and for the many other reasons cited in the document itself, the Commission unanimously and enthusiastically recommends the new ordinance for your action.

The enclosed proposed new legislation retains the overall structure and goals of the former proposed legislation from 2014-15, but does so in a more citizen-friendly way. The intent of the legislation is to ensure that all properties given historic preservation status and protection in the City of Bowling Green – which can only happen through subsequent legislative action to designate specific Historic Buildings, Districts, Landmarks, Objects, Sites and Structures -- shall meet the standards set forth therein.

This proposed new legislation differs in several important ways from its predecessor. (1) First of all, it does not include a detailed set of so-called "Design Guidelines," as its predecessor did. Instead, the proposed ordinance simply references the Secretary of the Interior's comprehensive "Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitation, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings." (2) Second, it is written so that the rules governing owner-proposed changes to the backs of Historic Buildings will be applied more leniently and flexibly than those governing the fronts and sides of buildings, so long as the alteration is generally consistent in appearance with the historic "feel" of the building and so long as the streetscape is not noticeably affected. We support "sympathetic preservation," rather than "pure" preservation. (3) And, third, it is not the intent of this legislation to dictate every small detail of alterations, restorations, etc. to a historic property. In relatively minor matters of detail, flexibility will be allowed. For example, if a

residential owner knows that regular wooden porch steps will not hold the paint that he/she has chosen, non-wooden boards of a close color may be substituted. Or, to give another example, if owners wish to replace wooden double-hung windows with more efficient models, they may do so, as long as the replacements give the same general appearance as the originals.

The Historic Preservation Commission shall, in every instance of a proposed alteration, restoration, replacement, etc., work cooperatively with the owner of the property to seek a practical execution of the proposed work that will honor both the owner's intent and the goal of historic preservation as defined in this and any related legislation in the City of Bowling Green.