

Pensacola Park Post

A Monthly Pensacola Park Neighborhood Distribution

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PENSACOLA PARK IS OFFICIALLY AN H-1 (HISTORIC) OVERLAY:

Sometimes, the second time's a charm. In 1997, Seven Parks, our neighbor to the north that includes Arcadia Park to Dantzler Court, won historic overlay (H-1) designation. Soon after, a portion of Pensacola Park (known as WGPL) began an H-1 process. At that time, there appeared to be no immediate push to pursue an H-1 protection and the process was soon abandoned. Twenty years later, the neighborhood had a rude awakening. A permit to re-zone and demolish the 1920s bungalow at the corner of Penmoken and Nicholasville was submitted, which inspired investigation into future developmental plans in our neighborhood. This rallied the neighborhood to become organized in order to protect Pensacola Park against inappropriate development. Would an ND-1 or an H-1 provide better oversight of development? A committee was created to inform neighbors and gauge support. Informational flyers, with options outlined, were distributed to everyone within the Pensacola Park boundaries. Meetings with neighbors, the Division of Historic Preservation, Division of Planning, and Councilman Jake Gibbs provided opportunities to voice concerns, thoughts, and ideas. Ultimately, it was decided that pursuing an H-1 overlay was the best course of action. Not only is Pensacola Park one of Lexington's oldest suburbs, H-1 requires both demolition and new construction to be vetted to ensure appropriateness. In contrast, an ND-1 does not have this requirement: restrictions would be imposed without meaningful oversight into appropriateness.

At this point, a group of neighbors went door-to-door to discuss what H-1 would mean for our neighborhood. Sixty five percent of the households signed in support of moving forward, and 5% signed against. Having exceeded the LFUCG Division of Planning's threshold of 50% support, the signatures were submitted and the official application process to re-zone our neighborhood began. The first step involved the Division of Planning sending out mailers to everyone in the neighborhood requesting a yes or no vote on an H-1 re-zone. Over 50% of households voted, with 72% supporting the overlay. Next, the Division of Historic Preservation engaged a consultant to determine if Pensacola Park met historic guidelines. The study found that Pensacola Park exemplifies a historic neighborhood. The findings stated:

Finding 1: The study area is a cohesive, dense concentration of significant domestic architecture mainly dating from 1919 until 1944. This was a time of expansion and growth in Lexington's history. During this roughly 20 years (mostly between the world wars), the proposed historic district development offered well designed, affordable, well built homes to many first-time homeowners and others.

Finding 2. The area includes over 400 period examples of the residential architecture popular during the development of Lexington between the wars. The historic buildings within the proposed district cover a range primarily of small and medium scale houses of one and one and one-half story. The area also includes a limited number of two-story, larger houses.

Finding 3. The structures within the study area are representative of several nationally popular architectural styles quite representative of the development period, including Colonial Revival, Craftsman, Bungalow, Tudor Revival, American Foursquare and Small American House.

Finding 4. The level of architectural integrity is very high throughout the study area. The historic houses maintain their character-defining styles and forms. The streetscapes and layout remain unchanged. There are very few incidents of adverse character altering changes to structures or sites within the boundaries of the proposed district.

Finding 5. The study area meets five of the nine criteria necessary for Local Historic (H-1) Overlay Zoning as established in Article 13, Section 13-3(g) of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Zoning Ordinance. The Criteria met are:

- Criteria 13-3(g) (1) It has value as part of the cultural or archaeological heritage of the county, state, or nation.
- Criteria 13-3 (g) (3) It is identified with a person or person or famous entity who significantly contributed to the development of the country, state, or nation.
- Criteria 13-3(g) (6) It has distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials.
- Criteria 13-3(g) (7) It has character as a geographically definable area possessing significant concentration of buildings or structures united by past events or by its plan or physical development.
- Criteria 13-3(g) (8) It has character as an established and geographically definable residential neighborhood, agricultural area, or business district, united by culture, architectural style or physical plan and development. ((CONT. TO NEXT PAGE...))



((...CONT. FROM FRONT PAGE)) **To read the ENTIRE report, go to <https://www.lexingtonky.gov/news/08-02-2019/pensacola-park-seeks-historic-designation>.**

After submission of the report, the Division of Historic Preservation reviewed the findings and moved to recommend that the Board of Architectural Review (BOAR) approve the historic overlay. The BOAR, one of three government entities that must approve a historic overlay, met and received public comments on the findings. After voting unanimously that Pensacola Park is indeed a historic neighborhood, the BOAR added that our neighborhood is a showcase: a gem of historic homes. The BOAR recommendation was then submitted to the Division of Planning; in the review of all documents to this point, the Division of Planning focused on alignment with the 2019 Comprehensive Plan. In affirming that Pensacola Park is in line with the plan, the Division stated: “The 2018 Comprehensive Plan has several Goals, Objectives, and Policies, which affirm the need for historic preservation within the community...This includes growing a successful community through well-designed neighborhoods, by encouraging existing neighborhoods, like the Pensacola Park Neighborhood, to flourish through the use of neighborhood character preservation (Theme A, Goal #3, a). The establishment of an H-1 Overlay zone in the Pensacola Park Neighborhood also would allow for both the protection and enhancement of the natural and cultural landscapes that give Lexington-Fayette County and the subject area its unique identity and image (Theme D, Goal #3). This is achieved through the protection of historic architectural resources (Theme D, Goal #3a) by requiring increased review and the requirement of a Certificate of Appropriateness.”

The Division’s only recommendation was to cut out the El Toro restaurant (1917 Nicholasville Road) from the overlay. With Planning and Historic Preservation Divisions’ recommendations, BOAR approval, and the consultant documents, the proposal moved to the second governmental entity required for approving an historic overlay, the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission listened to the recommendations and to public comment (over 30 people spoke in favor of the overlay, and two lawyers spoke against; the lawyers’ argument was that 1733, 1737, and 1739 Nicholasville Road were already re-zoned R-3 or nonconforming zoning [which would allow apartment buildings]). The Planning Commission moved to amend the boundary to remove four Nicholasville Road properties from the proposed Pensacola Park Boundary 1917 (El Toro), 1739, 1737, and 1733. The Commission unanimously passed the rest of the overlay. The proposal then moved to the third and final governing body necessary for approval, the Urban County Council. Seven council members voted for the overlay and six voted against, with one recusal. Here it got a bit confusing. Since the overlay was filed through the Division of Planning, the Council needed eight NO votes to overturn the Planning Commission’s recommendation to go historic. There were only six no votes, so the H-1 overlay was approved. Pensacola Park thus became the 16th district in Lexington to be awarded an historic overlay.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE HOME OWNER?

Historic overlay is now in effect as of Dec 4th 2019. If a homeowner already had a building permit pulled or is currently working on an exterior project, and the city was aware of these changes (prior to Dec 4th 2019), then you can finish your work within a reasonable amount of time. Otherwise, when you wish to do something with the EXTERIOR of your home, you will need to first run it by the Division of Historic Preservation (101 E. Vine Street Lexington KY 859-258-3265). This is not meant to be a difficult process; in fact, many proposed projects entail simple over-the-counter discussions with the historic staff, and can get approved the same day. Historic staff has put together a great how-to document that can be found on our website, to help the homeowner through the approval process. Of course, more is involved with big projects, such as new construction and demolition. The applicant must secure a building or demolition permit through the Division of Planning, then this proposal must be heard and approved by the Board of Architectural Review.

The Pensacola Park Neighborhood Association is here to help anyone through this process, so if you are confused, or need help getting something approved (e.g. ideas for materials, plans, construction) there are many in this neighborhood who are qualified to lend advice. Our neighborhood has contractors, architects, engineers, historic preservationists, and professors on hand to help. Please email us.


IMPORTANT NEIGHBORHOOD DATES/MEETINGS:

- Next Monthly Neighborhood Meeting: Wednesday Feb 5th at 7pm at the Liken House.

SUPPORT LOCAL PENSACOLA PARK BUSINESSES!! Please contact us to place an ad. It is \$5 a month, and you must be a resident within Pensacola Park.



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PENSACOLA PARK PRESERVATION SOCIETY



Pensacola Park Preservation Society is a non-profit 501(c)3, formed to bring together residents and businesses located in the Pensacola Park Neighborhood for the common good of (1) preserving the historic integrity and resources of the area; (2) creating an environment that promotes sustainable and appropriate growth for the neighborhood; and (3) providing historic education and assistance to those in the Pensacola Park Neighborhood for the preservation and rehabilitation of historic homes, structures, and landscapes. Also check us out online at www.pensacolapark.org, and follow us on Facebook @ Pensacola Park Preservation Society.

All donations to Pensacola Park Preservation Society are tax deductible! We also receive donations from Amazon Smile and Kroger Community Rewards if you choose us as your charity! Please let us know if you need help setting these programs up or would like to donate.

If you have any questions or would like to submit topics or op-eds to Pensacola Park Post, please feel free to write us at pensacolapark@gmail.com. If you would like to stop receiving the free monthly post, please write us and put “stop post” in the heading, along with your physical address. Thank you.