



Legislation Text

File #: 16-025, **Version:** 1

TITLE:

Discussion of regulations related to downtown National Register Historic Districts

PURPOSE: The purpose of this item is to begin a conversation relating to existing regulations for properties within the downtown National Register Historic Districts.

DEPARTMENT: Planning

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INFORMATION: More than a year ago, staff had an internal conversation about the language in an existing provision of the density and dimensional requirements in the Land Use Ordinance (LUO), Section 15-185(3)(e), that limits building height on contributing properties within the Town's National Register Commercial District to two stories. The Town has three national register historic districts in the downtown area: the Alberta Mill Complex, listed in 1976; the Carrboro Commercial District, listed in 1985; and the Thomas F. Lloyd Historic District, listed in 1986. The focus of the staff conversation had to do with the language which refers to buildings as "contributing," a determination based in large part on the integrity of the resource, and one that is made during the formal process to nominate a district to the National Register of Historic Places. Staff began work on a draft text amendment to clarify this language, when other priorities took precedence.

When taking a fresh look at the LUO and the district boundaries later in the year, staff noticed that some lots with buildings of historic significance were not included in the districts. If the intent of the original provision in the LUO was to preserve the character of the historic areas downtown via limitations on height within the district boundaries, there appeared to be a disconnect. Upon further consideration, other action might be needed to achieve that objective and protection of the long-term appearance and character of the historic core of downtown Carrboro.

A resolution has been prepared that offers the Board options for moving forward, including the possibility of designating some of the historic downtown as a local historic district, a process described in the LUO under Section 15-338.

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: There are no costs associated with discussing this item. Future costs and staff time will vary in relation to any actions requested on the noted options for moving forward.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Board of Aldermen consider the attached resolution, and provide direction for potential next steps (*Attachment A*).