

Spokane City Plan Commission
Findings of Fact, Conclusions, and Recommendation

Proposed Adoption of SMC 17D.100.290, Cannon Streetcar Suburb Local Historic District Overlay Zone and Design Standards and Guidelines

A recommendation from the City Plan Commission to the City Council to approve the adoption of SMC 17D.100.290, Cannon Streetcar Suburb Local Historic District Overlay Zone and Design Standards and Guidelines. The proposal is related to the request from the Cliff-Cannon Neighborhood and the Cannon Historic District Subcommittee requesting the formation of a local historic district in the Cliff-Cannon Neighborhood, which would include the approval of the historic district formation through a balloting process and the legislative action to approve an overlay zone.

Findings of Fact:

- A. The City of Spokane's Comprehensive Plan 1) encourages the recognition and preservation of unique or outstanding landmark structures, buildings, and sites." (Goal DP 1.1), 2) establishes historic preservation as a high priority within city programs (Goal DP 3.1), 3) requires that the city identify historic resources to guide decision making in planning" (Goal DP 3.3) and 4) seeks to maintain and utilize the expertise of the Landmarks Commission in decision making by the City Council, City Plan Commission, City Parks Board, and other city agencies in matters of historic preservation. (Goal DP 3.5).
- B. The Comprehensive Plan also requires that the City utilize design guidelines and criteria for sub-areas and historic districts that are based on local community participation and the particular character and development issues of each subarea or historic district. (Goal DP 2.7).
- C. To accomplish this, the City's Comprehensive Plan states as a goal to "provide incentives to property owners to encourage historic preservation" (Goal DP 3.9) and assist and cooperate with owners of historic properties to identify, recognize, and plan for the use of their property to ensure compatibility with preservation objectives (Goal DP 3.11) as well as encourage the deconstruction and reuse of historic materials and features when historic buildings are demolished. (Goal DP 3.12).
- D. The City's Comprehensive Plan recognizes our neighborhoods as one of our City's finest assets, and therefore requires that the City assist neighborhoods and other potential historic districts to identify, recognize, and highlight their social and economic origins and promote the preservation of their historic heritage, cultural resources, and built environment. (Goal DP 3.13).

- E. The City Council adopted Ordinance No. C-35580 on February 12, 2018 whereby the City Council recodified the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance. Part of that recodification included the process for the formation of local historic districts.
- F. The Cliff-Cannon Neighborhood Council contacted the Spokane Historic Preservation Office on October 7, 2016 requesting that a local historic district be formed in the neighborhood; and
- G. The Cliff-Cannon Neighborhood Council, the Cannon Historic District Subcommittee, and the Spokane City/ County Historic Preservation Office conducted outreach efforts including multiple presentations, three Plan Commission workshops, neighborhood workshops, websites with additional information, mailings, a survey, and direct feedback from property owners; and
- H. After conducting extensive historic research and engaging the community for input and feedback, a Cannon Streetcar Suburb Local Historic District Nomination document, Cannon Streetcar Suburb Local Historic District Resource Forms, and Cannon Streetcar Suburb Local Historic District Design Standards and Guidelines have been developed for adoption of the district to the Spokane Register of Historic Places and for the formation of the Cannon Streetcar Suburb Local Historic District Overlay Zone; and
- I. The adoption of the Cannon Streetcar Suburb Local Historic District Overlay Zone and Design Standards and Guidelines would be the final step in the formation of this local historic district.
- J. On July 22, and August 12, 2020, and December 14, 2022 the Spokane City Plan Commission held workshops to study the proposed ordinance, the formation of the Cannon Streetcar Suburb Local Historic District, and the adoption of the Design Standards and Guidelines.
- K. On July 8, 2020, pursuant to RCW 36.70A.106, the City notified the Washington State Department of Commerce of its intent to adopt this proposed ordinance. On July 8, 2020, the City received an acknowledgement letter from the Department of Commerce.
- L. Three public workshops in Cannon were held on May 12, 2022, June 14, 2022, and July 28, 2022 amongst regular check-ins with the Cliff-Cannon Neighborhood Council at their regular meetings. Additional neighborhood workshops were done virtually during the pandemic.
- M. As required by SMC 17D.100.030, a vote of the property owners within the district boundaries was conducted to determine support for the district. 493 ballots with 577 votes (1 vote per developable parcel within the boundary) were sent via USPS on September 14, 2022. 391 votes were returned by the deadline on November 14, 2022. The HPO received 324 "YES" votes to form the district, 67 "NO" votes were received; and 186 votes were not returned to the HPO office. Turnout was 68%. Of those who returned ballots, 83% were in favor of forming the district, and once the non-returned votes are accounted for, 56.1% of the TOTAL owners of

properties within the district boundaries were in favor, which exceeded the 50% +1 required by city ordinance (289 “YES” votes minimum).

- N. The City caused notice of the proposed ordinance and announcement of the Plan Commission's January 25, 2023 hearing to be published in the Spokesman Review on January 11, 2023 and again on January 18, 2023.
- O. On January 3, 2023, the responsible official issued a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Checklist and Determination of Non-Significance for the proposed ordinance. The public comment period for the SEPA determination ended on June 25, 2022 at 4:00 pm. No public comments were received.
- P. On January 4, 2023, the City mailed a Notice of Plan Commission Hearing and SEPA Determination to all residents, taxpayers and property owners in the proposed boundary of the Cannon Streetcar Suburb Historic District Overlay, as well as those within 400 feet of the proposed boundary, with information about the hearing on the overlay zone.
- Q. On January 25, 2023, the City Plan Commission held a public hearing on the proposed ordinance; public testimony was taken.

Public Comment:

- A. Written comments received by January 25, 2023 were provided to the Plan Commission prior to their deliberations on January 25, 2023, regarding the proposed ordinance: 23 in favor, 3 neutral, and 4 in opposition.
- B. During the hearing on January 25, 2023, the Plan Commission heard testimony from 5 individuals: all 5 were in favor of the proposed ordinance including the recommendation for the formation of the historic district and adoption of the design standards and guidelines.
- C. No other testimony was submitted.

Plan Commission Deliberations:

- A. During deliberations, the Plan Commission considered the proposed ordinance relating to the adoption of the Cannon Streetcar Suburb Local Historic District Overlay Zone and Design Standards and Guidelines.
- B. During deliberations, a motion was made to amend the proposal to exclude historic preservation design review of exterior changes to noncontributing structures and new construction within the district. Following discussion and a vote of 7-3, the motion failed.
- C. During deliberation, the Plan Commission expressed interest in having the City Council add an item to the Plan Commission's annual workplan calling for the Plan Commission to review and make recommendations to the City Council regarding

the consistency of the creation of historic districts with the need to create more housing opportunities in Spokane.

- D. During deliberations, Plan Commissioners concluded that the proposed ordinance, including the proposed formation of the Cannon Streetcar Suburb Local Historic District Overlay Zone and adoption of the design standards and guidelines (SMC 17D.100.290) was consistent with (i) Chapter 17D.100 SMC, (ii) applicable provisions of the Comprehensive Plan, and (iii) bears a substantial relation to public health, safety, welfare, and protection of the environment.
- E. The Plan Commission hereby incorporates and adopts the contents of the Staff Report, City of Spokane Plan Commission Hearing: Cannon Streetcar Suburb Historic District Overlay Zone (SMC 17D.100.290) January 25, 2023 in support of these findings and recommendations.

Conclusions:

The proposed adoption of SMC 17D.100.290, Cannon Streetcar Suburb Local Historic District Overlay Zone and Design Standards and Guidelines is fully consistent with applicable provisions of the City of Spokane Comprehensive Plan and bears a substantial relation to the public health, safety, welfare, and protection of the environment.

Recommendation:

By a vote of 9 – 1, the Plan Commission recommends that the City Council adopt the proposed ordinance relating to the adoption of SMC 17D.100.290 regarding the Cannon Streetcar Suburb Local Historic District Overlay Zone and Design Standards and Guidelines.


Greg Francis (Jan 30, 2023 15:33 PST)

Greg Francis, President
Spokane Plan Commission
Jan 30, 2023