



Input for Joint HDC/PAB Meeting

April 26, 2023

Regular meetings of the PAB and HDC are critical to provide the priorities and interface we need for building a sustainable future.

- A **Comprehensive Preservation Plan** is a good idea. If we have the staff and resources to do that as part of the updates of the Comp Plan and LDC, that would be ideal. At this point in time, updates of the Comp Plan and LDC are urgent. If we don't complete those tasks soon, it will be too late for historic preservation.
- The current Comp Plan contains a number of potentially useful notions regarding preserving historic structures. However, we don't know whether and to what extent they have been applied.
- **The most important points from our perspective** are: (Refer also to our 4/12/23 message to the PAB regarding commercial updates.)
 - **Getting rid of the notion of urban density**, which is inappropriate and unsafe for an industrialized barrier island. It also conflicts with the small-town character of Fernandina Beach, which we know attracts tourists and residents.
 - **Getting rid of the notion of pulling the buildings out to the sidewalk, etc., in districts wherever this is not historically appropriate.** It blocks wildlife corridors and has been documented to create an unhealthy environment for humans.
 - **No new townhouses in historic districts where they are not historically appropriate in Fernandina Beach.**
- **We need to:**
 - **Develop multiple historic districts and categories** that represent different periods of time or characters. Such districts may overlap, and we may want to identify categories represented by individual structures or structures scattered across the city (e.g., noteworthy renovations, noteworthy architectural examples, noteworthy beach houses, noteworthy commercial structures—better phrasing can be developed).
 - **Be inclusive** in representing historic districts of people of color, who have played a major role in the history of this city.
 - **Consider viewshed** when identifying these districts and in permitting properties that will not fit in with the district. We have greatly diminished our historic district by



- permitting a wide variety of development that reduces the size and character of the historic district, and essentially defeats the multiple purposes of such districts.
- **Be creative in developing means of support** for those who live in historic buildings, but who cannot afford the necessary maintenance or repair. The importance of this goes beyond individual properties.
 - **Where commercial redevelopment is in historic areas, it needs to be as appropriate as possible.** This will enhance the district.
 - **Educate the public** on the relevant periods and styles, including variance. While it would prove counterproductive to overrun the city with signs, subtle signs and online support like story maps would be helpful.
 - **With community input, develop a plan for protecting properties that may be subject to flooding.** If at all possible and for as long as possible, plans should utilize **nature-based solutions other than elevation.** We need this planning for the entire city and for certain districts as well as individual properties.
 - **Avoid further development in the high hazard zone (CHHA)**
 - **Complete the flood wall** (purchase and conserve the properties that are holdouts), **restore the shoreline as a living shoreline and develop a well vegetated park area with mature trees along the river**
 - **Remaining shrimpers (in the current locations or away from downtown) should be incentivized to improve their shorelines in collaboration with the City and County.**
 - **Prevent any breaches or other damage to the dunes and revetment.**
 - **Address parking and transportation challenges.**

