

# Harvard Belmont Landmark District Guidelines

## Development and Design Review Guidelines

The Landmarks Preservation Board has adopted the following in accordance with the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (SMC 25.12), the Harvard-Belmont Landmark District Ordinance (SMC 25.22) and the Administrative Code of the City of Seattle, (SMC 3.02)

### I. STATEMENT OF INTENT AND PURPOSE

The Development and Design Review Guidelines identify the unique values of the district and are consistent with the purposes of the district and other criteria of SMC 25.22 which created the Landmark District. The guidelines identify design characteristics which have either a positive or negative effect upon the unique values of the district and specify design related considerations which will be allowed, encouraged, limited or excluded from the District when Certificate of Approval applications are reviewed.

Within the District, a Certificate of Approval, issued by the Landmarks Preservation Board, is required prior to the issuance of any city building, demolition, street use, or other permits for proposed work which work is within or visible from a public street, alley or way, and, which involves:

- A. The demolition of, or exterior alterations or additions to, any building or structure;
- B. Any new construction;
- C. The addition or removal of major landscape and site elements, such as retaining walls, gateways, trees or driveways.

In addition, for proposed removal or addition of significant landscape and site elements for which permits are not required, and which are identified specifically in the district Development and Design Review Guidelines, a Certificate of Approval from the Landmarks Preservation Board shall also be required prior to the initiation of the proposed work.

#### Purpose and Goals

The purpose and goals of the Harvard-Belmont District are:

- A. To preserve, protect, enhance, and perpetuate those elements of the District's cultural, social, economic, architectural, and historic heritage;
- B. To foster community and civic pride in the significance and accomplishments of the past;
- C. To stabilize or improve the historic authenticity, economic vitality, and aesthetic value of the district;
- D. To promote and encourage continued private ownership and use of buildings and other structures;
- E. To encourage continued City interest and support in the District; and to recognize and promote the local identity of the area.

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## 2. CRITERIA AND VALUES

The Board shall consider the following criteria/values in the utilization of its Guidelines:

A primary quality of the Harvard-Belmont Landmark District is that existing development respects (observes) the privacy of nearby properties.

Another primary quality of the Harvard-Belmont Landmark District is that scenic views have not been exploited at the expense of greenery and privacy.

The category of the building shall be considered when changes are proposed. Category 1 buildings are the most important in the district and these properties shall, to the greatest extent possible, retain the intrinsic historic values recognized when the district was formed.

A significant number of buildings within the Harvard-Belmont Landmark District individually embody distinctive characteristics of early twentieth century eclectic residential architectures. These buildings and the mature landscaping which forms their backdrop, collectively create a contiguous streetscape and a neighborhood that are compatible in terms of design, scale, and use of materials.

### Building Categories

The buildings within the District are categorized as follows:

Category 1: Buildings and significant landscape elements with an identifiable architectural or historic significance in satisfaction of the appropriate criteria of the Seattle Landmark Ordinance (SMC 25.12) These buildings characterize a distinctive architectural style, or contain elements of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship which are characteristic of an architectural period. The preservation of these elements is of primary importance to the District. May also include historic sites.

Category 2: Buildings or sites with less architectural significance. However, because of scale, design, use of materials, or location, these buildings make a positive and compatible contribution to the character and appearance of the area as a whole and to the Category 1 buildings in particular.

Category 3: Buildings or sites with neither architectural nor historic significance. They make no significant contribution to the visual or physical quality of the area. Any future development of these sites will be of concern to the continued quality of the District.

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## 3. GUIDELINES

### A. PROCEDURE

Any concept, design or plan submitted for review shall be considered only if it conforms to current zoning.

### B. SETTING

#### 1. General

Guideline: New development in the District should not obstruct existing views. The ultimate height of new trees and other landscaping should be considered so that they do not become so dense that views are blocked.

Guideline: The height of new buildings and additions should be similar to the heights of adjacent properties so that the relationship of building heights and the land contour remains the same.

Guideline: Where possible changes in grade should be handled by contouring the land. Retaining walls when necessary shall keep to the minimum height required.

Guideline: Preserve and enhance the unusual spaces created by the irregular streets.

#### 2. The Block

Guideline: Maintain yard space, especially that of front and side yards visible from the street. Front yards should not be used for parking areas. Protect or add trees and landscaping to help reinforce yard edges.

Guideline: Maintain the pattern of primary building entrances facing the street. Renovations should preserve the original building entrances facing the street. New construction should locate the primary entrance facing the street.

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Guideline: Maintain the pattern of spaces between buildings.

### C. INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS

#### 1. Additions or renovations

Guideline: Additions should be sympathetic to the original design and should not, except as additions, change the character of the original structure which is being preserved.

Guideline: The imitation of historic styles is strongly discouraged, new buildings should be compatible with older structures, especially in terms of other guideline criteria. But they should also be a true product of the present, not a false product of the past.

Guideline: Preserve the visual quality of individual facades including use of materials, form and structure.

Guideline: The exterior materials used for additions shall be similar to exterior materials used in the original building and should be finished in ways that are consistent with the original building.

#### 2. Building Components

Guideline: Building components should be similar in size and shape to those already in use along the street.

Guideline: The use of wood, brick and stucco is strongly encouraged in new construction. If brick is used consider creating contemporary interpretations of patterned brick. When brick facades are renovated, do not cover up existing patterns, and do not paint over them unless absolutely necessary.

Guideline: If concrete is used as a finish material special consideration shall be given to insure visual compatibility with the district.

Guideline: Maintaining variety in building materials is acceptable as long as other design criteria are met.

#### 3. Landscaping:

Guideline: Maintain existing landscaping, especially the mature trees.

Guideline: Maintain the alignment and spacing of street trees. Planting street trees where none now exist is encouraged. Existing street trees are important and pruning should be done only in a professional manner to maintain the trees health and to retain the natural form.

Guideline: Maintain a clear separation between sidewalk and street and between sidewalk and site.

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Guideline: Keep the space between sidewalk and street as a green planting space maintaining the same width wherever possible. Ground covers may be used in place of grass. Do not use crushed rock, concrete or similar materials as the major surface material.

Guideline: Privacy of existing properties should be preserved.

### 4. Fences and Walls:

Guideline: If fencing is required, low fences are encouraged especially in front yards to maintain the existing openness of the district.

Guideline: Fencing and wall materials shall be consistent with the district.

Guideline: Planting is encouraged to soften the visual appearance of fencing and walls.

### 5. Other Building Elements:

Guideline: Building elements such as shutters, brackets, porches, etc., should at least look functional. (Porches should actually shelter entrances, brackets should actually support something).

### 6. Parking:

Guideline: Granted parking is a problem in the District. Therefore, a variety of parking solutions may be necessary. Every effort shall be made to limit visibility from the street. Maximize screening of parking when it is visible from the street. When possible the parking should be located to the rear of the building, and access should be limited to a single minimum sized curb cut.

## D. SIGNS

Guideline: Keep signs relatively small and subordinate to the building. Signs that flash, blink, revolve or are otherwise in motion or appear to be in motion, or signs that vary in intensity shall not be permitted. Sign lighting should be subdued, incandescent and front-lit from the exterior rather than back-lit of the fluorescent type. Signs shall be designed to minimize glare on existing buildings.

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Commercial Buildings: Signs should fit within the existing features of the facade. Flush mounted signs are encouraged.

Projecting signs should be limited in size and number to avoid obscuring building features that would otherwise be visible along the block.

Residential Buildings: Freestanding signs are preferred, but their size should be limited so that they do not obscure the buildings facade or break the patterns of the facades and yards.

Low signs are recommended. If signs must be placed on buildings, limit them to small identification panels at the entrances.

Illuminate signs with indirect light or obscure sources rather than with internal sources.

Wood and metal are the preferred materials for signs in residential areas. Signs should not be made of plastic materials.

The Landmarks Preservation Board may, at a public hearing and in accordance with the Harvard-Belmont Landmark District Ordinance (SMC 25.22), add to, subtract from, or amend these Development and Design Review guidelines adopted April 18, 1984.