



Seventh Task Force Meeting – Summary

17 May 2018

Seri Worden, Senior Field Officer of the National Trust for Historic Preservation presented the National Trust’s report findings on tiering and tailoring of preservation regulations. This report was at the behest of the Historic Preservation Task Force as members consider alternative historic districts models that can accommodate more flexible regulations for historic resources.

Task Force meeting lead Dominique Hawkins clarified for the public audience that information on tiering and tailoring practices is specific to different jurisdictions and their regulatory processes that have developed to best protect historic resources, and she shared that the Task Force would need to determine what could work in the City of Philadelphia. In order to further break-down the complexities of these practices, definitions were provided and discussed by Task Force members for the following terms:

Tiering - also called "levels," "grades," or "categories," a distinction of significance that is given to a resource to determine its importance. (taken from the National Trust for Historic Preservation DRAFT Tailored Preservation Tools Memo, May 2018)

Tailoring - “a flexible preservation tool that allows communities to employ different types of protective systems according to historic resource type and amount of regulation. It is designed to promote flexibility in a preservation commission’s application of preservation regulations, while at the same time allowing for alternative forms of regulation.” (taken from the May 16, 2018 memo from Will Cook titled “Tailored Designation & Review”)

The Task Force discussed the terms’ application to the current historic and conservation district regulation as well as the merits of incorporating a third district overlay that would be even more flexible in the regulation of care and maintenance of historic resources, yet afford oversight and guidelines for preservation and infill activities.

The Task Force concluded its conversation regarding these new methods of resource evaluation and types of districting by providing a draft definition of this new regulatory direction, explaining that a combined tailoring / tiering / differentiation model is:

“A policy framework that manages change to the existing built environment and incentivizes its adaptive re-use where the government objectively and systematically differentiates among various classes of historic resources (either individually or within districts) based on the class’s specific historic or cultural significance while taking into

account neighborhood and stakeholder desires, existing growth patterns, economic realities, and the need to foster the common good.”

At the next Task Force meeting, the members will present further refinement of this concept for public conversation and will include additional information about this concept in its mid-term report as well as the final report.

A special presentation was then given by Julie Donofrio, Managing Director of PennPRAXIS. Ms. Donofrio presented the results of a community survey that she and PennPRAXIS colleague Molly Lester had conducted with 19 community representatives. Small groups of residents met in their neighborhoods to discuss why preservation matters to them and their neighborhood. Community representatives moderated the discussions, and they were wide-ranging as community members revealed their wishes for oversight on development activities and application of historic preservation processes and programs in their neighborhood. Community representatives were selected with the help of the City’s Citizens Planning Institute and with the results of these meetings, PennPRAXIS will develop a framework for a preservation toolkit. Draft toolkits will be shared with the community members and further refined to meet their needs, as well as work concurrently with similar Task Force themes that further new and inclusive ideas. Additionally, PennPRAXIS will devise a communication strategy that will extend beyond the life of the Task Force in order to continue to engage community members.

The meeting concluded with moderated questions from the audience and answers from the Task Force members. During the meeting, public written questions were delivered to Task Force member Dominique Hawkins and members of the PHC staff, and the questions were then posed to Task Force members who could best address the question, based on their knowledge and expertise. For a full list of questions and answers, see the May Minutes document.

The next Task Force meeting will be held Thursday, July 19, 2018 from 8:30 - 10:30 a.m. at 1515 Arch Street, Room 18-029.