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**METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY**

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**  
**Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlays**  
**May 19, 2021**

**Project:** Adoption of Consolidated NCZO guidelines for the Elmington Place neighborhood

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<p><b>Description of Project:</b> The Elmington Place neighborhood is requesting to be a part of the Consolidated Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlay Design Guidelines. The Commission adopted the consolidated guidelines for most NCZO's at the April 21, 2021 public hearing with an effective date of May 20, 2021.</p> <p><b>Recommendation Summary:</b> Staff recommends approval of the existing consolidated design guidelines for the Elmington NCZO finding that the project meets Section 17.40.410 of the Code and the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and with an effective date of June 17, 2021, the day after the June public hearing.</p>	<p><b>Attachments</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> Elmington chapter of Consolidated design guidelines</p>
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## **Applicable Ordinance:**

### **17.40.410 Powers and duties.**

**Establishment of Design Review Guidelines.** The historic zoning commission shall adopt design guidelines for each historic overlay district and apply those guidelines when considering preservation permit applications. Design guidelines relating to the construction, alteration, addition and repair to, and relocation and demolition of structures and other improvements shall be consistent with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. A public hearing following the applicable public notice requirements of Article XV of this chapter shall precede the adoption of all design review guidelines by the historic zoning commission. Testimony and evidence material to the type of historic overlay under consideration may be considered by the commission in its deliberations.

## **Analysis and Findings:**

The Historic Zoning Commission received funding from the Tennessee Historical Commission for a design guideline consolidation project. The project began in January 2019, and the grant period ended on September 30, 2019. At the April 21, 2021 public hearing, 19 neighborhood conservation zoning overlays design guidelines were consolidated into one document. No new overlays were a part of this proposal, and no boundary changes were proposed.

One goal is to provide clearer direction and address actions not contemplated when the guidelines were originally written. Another goal is to make it easier for applicants, particularly those who work in multiple neighborhoods, to better understand what guidelines are universal to all conservation overlays, and what, if any, differences there may be for a specific neighborhood. Having a separate design guideline document for each overlay worked well when there were just a handful of overlays. However, now that there are 23 neighborhood conservation overlays, each with their own set of similar design guidelines, the result is unwieldy for regular applicants. The revision also tightens up language that deals with form, massing, and scale while loosening restrictions for details and provides further clarification of past interpretations.

The process of developing the consolidated guidelines included monthly meetings with stakeholders, between February and August of 2019. Council members appointed the stakeholders from each overlay that is located within their respective district. Two additional stakeholders were added to represent frequent applicants. Metro Historic Zoning Commissioner Kaitlyn Jones served as the MHZC representative, and the relative council members were also included in the stakeholder list. Stakeholders provided regular information and updates to property owners in their districts. Some of the council districts now have new council members, and those council members have been informed about the project via email and one-on-one meetings.

A Nashville.gov webpage dedicated to the project has been available throughout the project and updated on a regular basis. The site includes a description of the project, design guideline drafts, a summary of changes, a previous word-for-word comparison of changes by district, and links to additional resources. A direct link to this page is

available on the zoning commission’s home page. <https://www.nashville.gov/Historical-Commission/About/Historic-Zoning-Commission/Design-Guideline-Consolidation-Project.aspx>. A series of videos, providing an overview of the project, have been on the website for the last several months.

Community meetings were held on July 11, August 14 and 19, September 23 and 30, and October 7 and 21, 2019. Public hearings were held on September 19, October 16, November 20 and December 18, 2019, and January 15 and February 19, 2020 and April 21, 2021. Revisions to the draft were made throughout the process, based on public comment from the stakeholders, council members, and members of the community.

Design guidelines are a delicate balance between prescriptive language that provides specific “rules” and non-prescriptive language allowing the guidelines to address a multitude of scenarios. The goal of any set of design guidelines is to both provide applicants a planning tool and to provide a board or commission with a decision-making tool.

The proposed revisions come from staff’s experience with applicants and council members over multiple years, discussions with the stakeholder group, an online discussion board, research of other cities, a 2008 study of local historic garages, discussion with Commissioners in a series of public hearings, and advice from consultants, Smith Gee Studio and Nashville Civic Design Center.

### Part I: Summary of Revisions

The National Park Service has revised the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, since the language was first included in the design guidelines; so that section has been revised to reflect the Park Service’s changes. Language has also been added to explain the role of the Standards in the design review process.

There is language to stress that in terms of new construction, the focus is on form, massing, and scale, rather than style.

Guidance is added for solar panels and skylights.

The section for demolition was moved to the beginning of the document to emphasize that the review of demolition is the most important role of the Commission. Language was added to clarify the review of full demolition of non-historic buildings and of demolition of features or “partial-demolition.”

Initially staff included in the proposed sections for “partial-demolition” the removal of siding. In a neighborhood conservation zoning overlay, replacement siding, windows, doors, and roofing are generally not currently reviewed. When all those features or even just the siding and windows are removed, the result is the actual demolition of the building. Siding on historic buildings often contributes to the stability of a building.

There have been cases where the building has collapsed once the siding has been removed and the interior gutted; therefore, staff proposes to add removal of siding as an action that is reviewed. There was public comment received both in favor of and against the review of replacement siding. Likewise, commissioners were for and against this change when it was discussed in December of 2019. The Commission adopted the design guidelines with this provision.

The material section has been pulled out of “new construction” as its own section and revised to provide a longer list of appropriate and inappropriate materials. Most of it remains italicized so that the Commission can easily address whatever new materials might become available in the future. It is not best-practices to include such a list as formal design guidelines but providing it as italicized information will allow the Commission flexibility in review while also providing guidance to applicants.

Staff is proposing that roofing color no longer be reviewed. No one has asked for a color that has been disapproved, to staff’s memory. Historically asphalt shingle came in a multitude of colors. In addition, roofing materials are not a permanent change to a building.

Staff initially proposed to no longer review siding reveal for new construction. The current practice is for all lap siding to have a reveal with a maximum of 5”. There is no record as to how the requirement was initially determined but it may have been considered an average or a typical reveal. Since historic siding comes in a variety of reveals, Staff recommends increasing the maximum to 7”, as that is a size that is readily available and still within the range of historic reveals. The draft provides an explanation as to when a wider reveals may be appropriate.

The section for “new construction” has been divided into sections for “infill,” “additions,” and “outbuildings” as there have been multiple comments that having them all together is unclear. This requires some duplication of guidelines but will hopefully provide better guidance for applicants.

The draft adds clarity for how “context” will usually be determined, which is the “block face.” Using context far away from a proposed project has been a concern voiced by numerous neighborhoods over multiple years. The Commission will retain the ability to define “block face” in situations where that is unclear or expand the context beyond the block face where the immediate context is not considered relevant.

The draft provides guidance for porte cocheres and roof decks.

The draft provides clarity on how building types relate to zoning. The building types should be consistent with the types in the immediate vicinity, no matter how the lot might be zoned. For instance, a new building on a commercially zoned property in a neighborhood of residential building types should follow a residential building type.

The draft does not include the italicized guidance for multi-unit developments as staff found that, in most cases, multi-unit developments result in: encouragement of demolition of historic buildings; alterations and additions that are not appropriate for the historic building; or require infill that is not appropriate for the district. Where multi-unit developments are appropriate, the site is usually so unique that the italicized design guidelines are of little use. Staff recommends addressing each of these requests on a case-by-case basis.

Staff added language to stress that additions that are taller or wider are only appropriate if all other solutions have been exhausted and in certain conditions. When the first few such additions were approved, it was never the intent to allow all additions to be wider or taller, which is how applicants have interpreted the italicized language.

The drawing shown in Figure 1 is currently in all the neighborhood conservation zoning design guidelines. It is often read as showing the only place where an addition can be constructed, which is not the case. Instead it is meant to show that if an addition is small enough to fit into that triangular area, then the addition would not need to be reviewed.

A related concern is that the text portion of the design guidelines, which attempts to state what is reviewed, is confusing in that one section states that the design guidelines only apply to areas that are visible from the public right-of-way and the next section states that public facades are more carefully reviewed than others. Since the establishment of the first overlay, the Commission has interpreted these sections as a review of all sides of any new construction but applying a less stringent review of those facades that are not publicly visible.

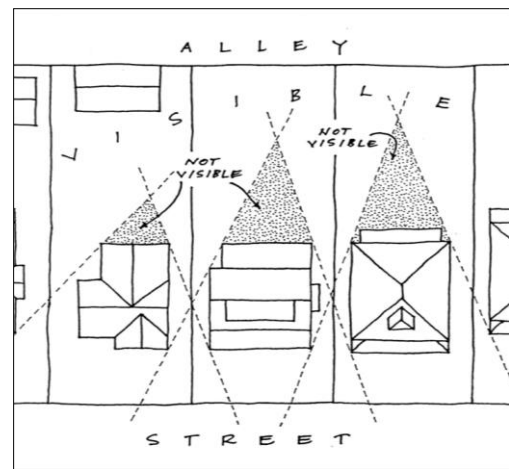


Figure 1: This image appears in all the NCZO design guidelines. *The caption reads: Image to the right shows the area in which new construction would not require a Preservation Permit. All construction outside of the area will be reviewed.*

The proposed solution to the image and the text is to remove the image (Figure 1) and replace it with a list of actions that would not require review. Removing the image is not likely to cause a hardship for applicants as the Commission only receives 1 or 2 requests a year for additions that would meet the conditions of Figure 1. By the time staff gathers enough information to determine a review is not needed, staff has enough information to just go ahead and issue the permit. Permits for small additions typically have been issued, and will continue to be issued, within a few days. We also recommend clarifying the text to meet the interpretation of the last several decades.

The language for outbuildings has been rewritten to allow for maximum sizes rather than basing the dimensions on the historic building, except in the case of corner lots. In addition, the draft language specifies that protrusions will be included in the “footprint”

when a setback determination is considered. Rather than trying to cover features with text alone, architectural features such as bays and dormers for outbuildings, are communicated via the drawings from the previous Part III, form book.

The proposed draft includes new and revised definitions. These are italicized and not officially part of the design guidelines.

## Part II

Part II is all the individual chapters for each district, where language specific to each district was collected from the current design guidelines.

All the maps have been revised. The boundaries have not changed, just the graphics of the maps so that they all have a consistent look.

### **Recommendation:**

Staff recommends approval of the existing consolidated design guidelines for the Elmington NCZO finding that the project meets section 17.40.410 of the Code and the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and with an effective date of June 17, 2021, the day after the June public hearing.

# NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION ZONING DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR TURN-OF-THE-20TH CENTURY DISTRICTS PART II: INDIVIDUAL DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES

Belle Meade Links Triangle <i>Adopted May 2003</i>	2	Kenner Manor <i>Adopted 2019</i>	80
Blakemore Planned Unit Dev. <i>Adopted March 1989</i>	8	Lockeland Springs-East End <i>Adopted September 1985</i>	94
Bowling House District <i>Adopted Sept 2017</i>	12	Maxwell Heights <i>Adopted February 2008</i>	100
Cherokee Park <i>Adopted August 2000</i>	18	Park & Elkins <i>Adopted July 2011</i>	110
Eastdale Place <i>Adopted April 2017</i>	22	Richland West End Addition <i>Adopted March 1996</i>	116
Eastwood <i>Adopted July 2004</i>	32	Salemtown <i>Adopted May 2014</i>	120
Edgehill <i>Adopted September 2018</i>	36	South Music Row <i>Adopted January 1997</i>	128
Elmington Place <i>Adopted February 2008</i>	50	Waverly-Belmont <i>Adopted January 2016</i>	132
Greenwood <i>Adopted April 2008</i>	56	Whitland <i>Adopted Spring 2009</i>	142
Inglewood Place <i>Adopted February 2016</i>	66	Woodlawn West <i>Adopted May 1999</i>	146

*Note: Belmont-Hillsboro, Hillsboro-West End and Richland-West NCZOs are not a part of this set of design guidelines. Please see individual guidelines for these districts.*





## ELMINGTON PLACE

### A SHORT HISTORY OF ELMINGTON PLACE

The Elmington Place Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlay is residential neighborhood to the east of West End Avenue and south of the Hillsboro-West End neighborhood. It developed in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with house styles representing popular American domestic architecture of the era – American foursquares, Colonial Revival houses, Craftsman bungalows, Tudor Revival bungalows, etc.



Prior to the development of the neighborhood, the area was part of Edwin Warner's Elmington Place estate. Warner, a local businessman, is best known today for helping to create Nashville's Warner Parks (i.e. Percy Warner Park and Edwin Warner Park), along with his brother, Percy Warner. The area first developed with single-family houses after 1911, when a plat created 30, 100'-wide lots along West End Avenue, Elmington Place, and what is now Gillespie and Byron Avenues. This "Joe Warner Addition" did not name any of the new streets that were to be created.



The southern half of the overlay, including the south side of Byron Avenue and the north side of Richardson Avenue, were platted for development thirteen years later in 1924. The new lots further carved up the front lawn of Edwin Warner's Elmington Place house. A *Tennessean* article from that year provides a photo of the Elmington Place house, now demolished, and describes the new streets and lots. It states, "The property to be sold has been subdivided into 20 building sites which range in size from 50 X 145 feet to 155 by 350 feet. Roads and sidewalks have been laid on the property which is just one block from the John B. Ransom school and from the carline."



During the first half of the twentieth century, the Elmington Place neighborhood fully developed with single-family houses, one apartment building, and one public school. Among the earliest houses in the conservation overlay are 3514 and 3516 Gillespie Avenue, two brick American Foursquares dating to approximately 1915. The neighborhood further developed to include Colonial Revival Houses (including 200 Elmington and 3506 Byron), Craftsman bungalows (including 3511 Gillespie and 208 Elmington), vernacular bungalows (including 3513 and 3518 Byron and 3514 Richardson), Tudor Revival houses (including 3515







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and 3517 Byron), and cottage style houses (including 3516 Byron). A c. 1930 apartment complex, the Elmington, features colonial revival detailing and is located at the corner of West End Avenue and Elmington place.



In 1918, the John B. Ransom public school was constructed in the district. Named for John B. Ransom, a prominent Nashville businessman and a cousin of Medicus Ransom, who served as the school's first principal, the school expanded in 1925 and became a part of the Nashville City School system in 1929. In 1932, a free-standing addition to the school facing Byron Avenue was constructed, which was designed by noted Nashville architect Edwin Keeble. In 1957, the school became a part of Nashville's desegregation story. Ransom School was one of fifteen schools the City planned to desegregate, and then Mayor Ben West's son planned to attend. The school was demolished in 2011, and the Metro Historic Zoning Commission approved the construction of 11 single-family homes on the site.

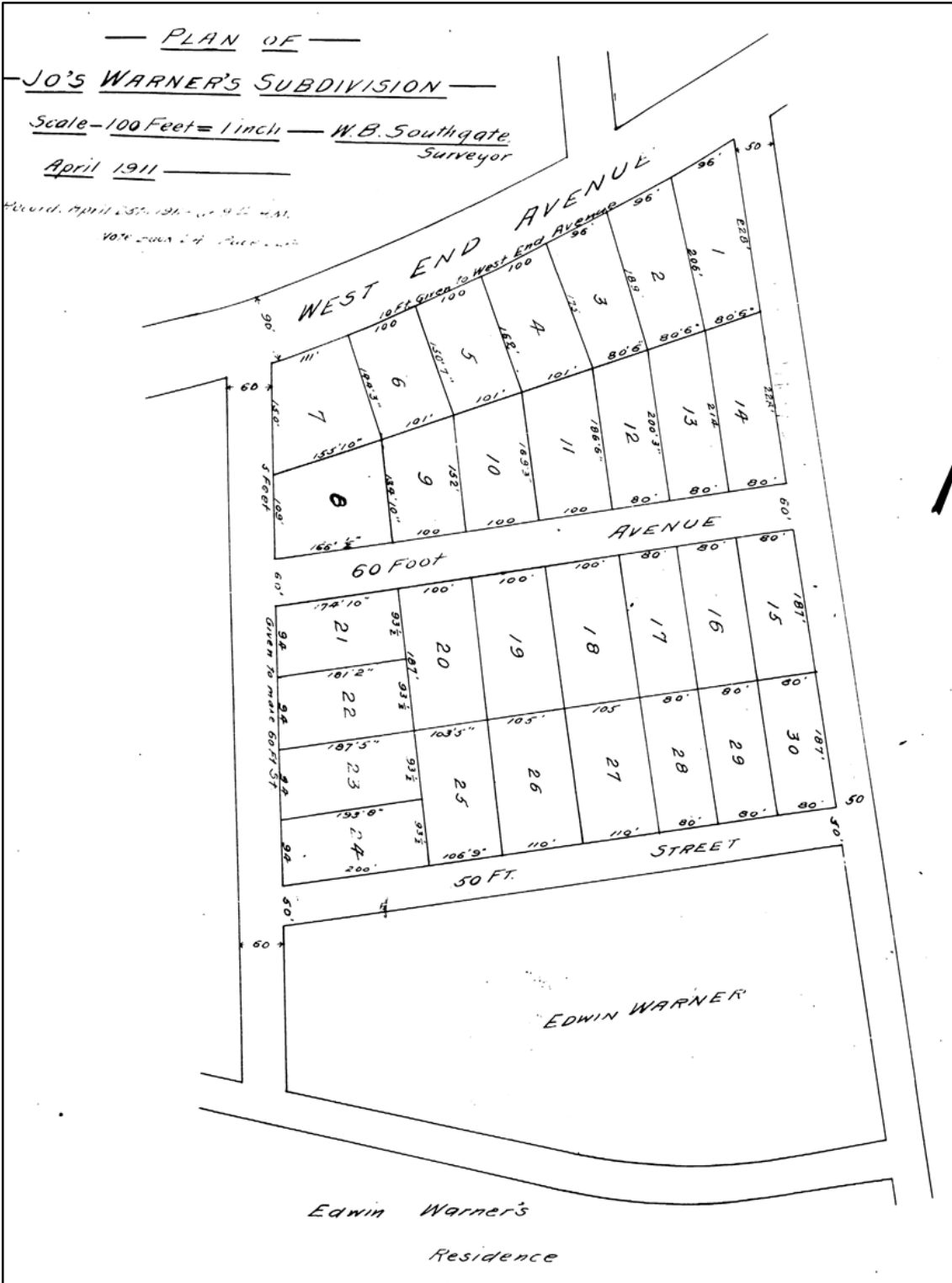


The construction of I-440 in the 1980s resulted in the demolition of significant part of the historic neighborhood, particularly along West End Avenue, Gillespie Avenue, and Byron Avenue. Only the south side of Byron Avenue and the north side of Richland Avenue escaped intact from the demolition, I-440 also completely severed the Elmington Place from the Hillsboro-West End neighborhood. Previously, the streets of Elmington Place were separated from those of Hillsboro-West End by the Tennessee Central Railroad; the construction of I-440 made this separation much more severe. Despite the demolition of parts of the neighborhood for I-440, the Elmington Place Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlay today retains a remarkable collection of early twentieth century residential architectural styles.





# ELMINGTON PLACE



This 1911 plat shows the first subdivision of Edwin Warner's property in what is now the Elmington Pace NCZO.



## ELMINGTON PLACE

Part of Richland Tract to Be Sold



The home of Mrs. Van Leer Kirkman, Elmington place. A street has been proposed in front of the residence, and the property across this street and shown in the foreground of the picture, will be sold at auction Thursday at 3 p. m., by the owners, the Wakefield-Davis Realty Company, who have purchased a portion of the front lawn of the Edwin Warner place, now owned by Mrs. Kirkman, and a part of the Richland golf links, just to the left of Elmington place.

The property to be sold has been subdivided into 20 building sites which range in size from 50x145 feet to 155x350 feet. Roads and sidewalks have been laid on the property which is just one block from the John B. Ransom school and from the carline.

*This 1924 Tennessean blurb shows Edwin Warner's Elmington Place house and describes the lots being created in the southern part of the NCZO*



## ELMINGTON PLACE

### SUMMARY OF HISTORIC CONTEXT

(This information is not a part of the design guidelines. It is provided for planning purposes and may change over time, as more information is learned and the district ages. This information is general for the entire neighborhood. A more immediate context is used for guiding infill design.)

**Period of Significance:** 1911-1940

**Number of Stories:** While there are some two-story homes, the historic context is primarily one and one and one half stories. Approximately 17% of the buildings are two stories.

**Typical Roof Forms:** The most common roof form in the neighborhood is a side-gable form. There are also a few examples of cross gable, hipped, and front gable homes.

**Typical Building Forms/Styles:** Bungalows are the dominant form in the neighborhood. Also found present are Colonial Revivals, Four-Squares, and Tudor Revivals.

**Entrances:** Most homes have projecting porches with gable or flat roofs. Some homes have recess porches, and a very small number have hoods or decorative door surrounds rather than porches.

**Cladding:** The most appropriate primary cladding is brick, as the vast majority of historic buildings are brick. Stone or lap siding may also be appropriate. Stucco and lap siding are common secondary materials, such as in gable-fields.