

### UDC Public Comments

Name: Schenry Chapman

Phone:

**Comment Category:** COA   Residential Design Standards   Public Notification   Parkland Dedication   Multi-Family Units  
(Please Circle One)

Comments:

Woodside is a reference  
for one + 2 story houses  
put the garage on the side + back

## UDC Public Comments

Name:

John Chapman

**Comment Category:** COA   Residential Design Standards   Public Notification   Parkland Dedication   Multi-Family Units  
(Please Circle One)

Comments:

HARC should remain as is.

### UDC Public Comments

Name:

Larry Brundidge

Comment Category:

(Please Circle One)

COA

Residential Design Standards

Public Notification

Parkland Dedication

Multi-Family Units

Comments:

I disagree with City Council making final decisions on COA's. HARC has effectively made these decisions over the last four years with only three appeals, two of which were upheld. Taking away this authority from HARC (over)

## UDC Public Comments

Name: Raymond Hasser

Comment Category: ☒ COA ☐ Residential Design Standards ☐ Public Notification ☐ Parkland Dedication ☐ Multi-Family Units  
(Please Circle One)

Comments: As a remodeler, I understand that it can be another layer of difficulty to deal with getting a COA to demolish an older home, however I think it would be folly of city council to allow demolition of priority properties without reviews.

Also, while I understand wanting a masonry standard to try to ensure the longevity of houses, I believe that requiring better framing standards would be a better use of time than requiring masonry on the exterior of a home.

### UDC Public Comments

Name: Tina Johnson

Comment Category: COA   Residential Design Standards   Public Notification   Parkland Dedication   Multi-Family Units  
(Please Circle One)

Comments: ~~If~~ the original proposal was to streamline the COA process, why are we adding a Concil approval to the HARC decision. This <sup>mediates</sup> ~~removes~~ the expertise of HARC.

## UDC Public Comments

Name: Lee Bain,

Comment Category: ☒ COA ☐ Residential Design Standards ☐ Public Notification ☐ Parkland Dedication ☐ Multi-Family Units  
(Please Circle One)

Comments: If the council desires to have veto power over, HARC, my recommendation is for it to require a 5-2 and not 4-3 decisions - This would be consistent with Pt 2 decisions -



## UDC Public Comments

Name: \*

Larry Brundidge

### Comment Categories

Certificate of Appropriateness

### Comments:

I disagree with City Council making final decisions on COAs. HARC has effectively made these decisions over the last four years with only three appeals, two of which were upheld. Taking away this authority from HARC will remove any incentive for applicants to adapt their projects to objections voiced by HARC. This is a powerful tool in HARC arsenals. Pre-City Council adaptations prior to approval are a major source of improvement change. Lastly, and importantly, changes made at the City Council review process must be submitted for citizen approval via publication. Last minute "shoot from the hip" changes without thorough visual review will destroy citizen rights.



## UDC Public Comments

Name: \*

Lee Bain

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### Comment Categories

Certificate of Appropriateness

### Comments:

If the council desires to have veto power over HARC, my recommendation is for it to require a 5-2 and not 4-3 decision -- this would be consistent with P&Z decisions





## UDC Public Comments

Name: \*

Ross Hunter

### Comment Categories

Certificate of Appropriateness

### Comments:

I think it important to specify the process when a recommended denial from HARC comes to the consent agenda.

How does an applicant trigger the matter to be pulled from the consent agenda to become an legislative agenda item? It's easy to say "ask a council member" but this seems like something we could actually write into the code so the mechanism can be made dependable and independent of needing a council member.

Furthermore, when an item is pulled from consent, council can review it that same evening, under current protocols. I advocate tabling such an item (a HARC decision) to the following council session. This way, the expense and effort required to attend a council public hearing need only occur on a known date. Having to show up for the consent agenda, and then waiting for the item to be pulled, and seeing where on the agenda it will be dealt with, is not very efficient. It would be better to give public notice, so that everyone knows clearly when to show up and what the issue is.

This proposal from council is taking away the right of appeal from a HARC decision, and turning a legal decision into a political decision. The maximum process we can write into the code, the better.



## UDC Public Comments

Name: \*

Sherwin Kahn

### Comment Categories

Certificate of Appropriateness

### Comments:

The current further castration of HARC is literally killing the unicorn. No one in Old Town favors these changes. They were proposed by men who do not live or care about the historic character of our city.

They are corrupt men coopted by bankers and developers. They want to make money. Period. They have no regard for preservation. This change will destroy Old Town. It will become East Austin or worse as backyards are redefined as infill locations and historic homes of low history are demolished. We will take large historic home backyards and fill them with high density inappropriate modern condos and townhouses.

Our leaders have failed this city. They should all be removed and someday this will be seen as the worst of times. Sadly the developers will be long gone like the plague of locusts they are. And certain politicians will be very rich.

I strongly opposed the changes to HARC two years ago. The same two Councilmen wanted its complete elimination. Here we are two years later and through the stroke of pen that is exactly what they are getting.

AS A PROPERTY OWNER I STRONGLY OPPOSE THESE CHANGES. SADLY THEY ARE NOT UP FOR A VOTE BECAUSE THIS IS NOT DEMOCRACY.

**To:** [GRP UDC](#)  
**Cc:** [Sofia Nelson](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] UDC Advisory Committee Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 13, 2019 8:14:11 AM  
**Attachments:** [March 13 2019 UDC Adv Comm Comments.pdf](#)

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Good morning.  
Please find attached my comments regarding the proposed UDC amendment changes.  
Thank you for your consideration.  
Susan

Susan Firth  
1403 Olive Street

Caution: This email originated from outside the City of Georgetown. Do not click links or open attachments unless you know the content is safe.

**From:** [Allan Barnes](#)  
**To:** [Sofia Nelson](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]UDC Amendments re Certificates of Appropriateness  
**Date:** Friday, March 08, 2019 9:54:20 AM

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**Caution: This email originated from outside the City of Georgetown. Do not click links or open attachments unless you know the content is safe.**

Sofia Nelson,  
City of Georgetown Planning Department

Sofia,

Thank you for providing the March 6th Workshop for citizens to learn more about the proposed changes in administering Certificates of Appropriateness. My three concerns follow:

**HARC SHOULD BE RETAINED AS FINAL DECISION MAKER** rather than switching that responsibility to the City Council. There are many reasons for this.

The approval process will necessarily be delayed for every application by requiring the extra time to go through the next City Council meeting. I have heard that it is important to maintain consistency with all other City Commissions which simply submit recommendations to City Council for approval. I have also heard that The Most Beautiful Square in Texas is the Golden Egg that attracts people to Georgetown. When you have a Golden Egg it should be treated as special rather than being forced into the carton with all the other eggs. Delaying every application in the interest of consistency is putting form over substance rather than providing exemplary service to applicants and in the process nurturing our Golden Egg.

Furthermore, the plan to approve HARC's recommendations via the Consent Agenda will lead to problems. If an application is moved from the Consent Agenda to the Public Agenda early in a meeting, how will the public and the applicant know in order to participate in the public discussion? Will discussion be postponed until a subsequent meeting (a further delay) in order to provide adequate notice? Who decides to move an item from the Consent Agenda? Will an Applicant who disagrees with a HARC recommendation have to find a City Council member advocate on the day of the meeting to get a hearing? Can a City Council member pull a favorable recommendation off the Consent Agenda and make a case to deny it? The present approval procedures provide an earlier decision and a clear avenue for prompt appeal if requested, all with adequate public notice. City Council should be retained as the avenue for prompt appeal for the few rather than an extra delay for every applicant.

HARC Commissioners are selected and trained to have expertise in the areas of historic preservation, architecture, and City guidelines; City Council members are not. Accordingly, more consistent and appropriate decisions will flow from HARC. And City Council Members' broader perspective and compromising skills will be available for the appeals.

Furthermore, the supermajority requirement to overturn a HARC decision should be retained to reinforce HARC's authority, but that should be coupled with a new provision that a majority of City Council may refer an appealed decision back to HARC for further discussion without triggering the penalty of a 6 month delay before re-submission. Such a provision would likely have resulted in better outcomes for two recent cases; the former Eats on Eighth property and the structure at Main and 6th. In the latter case, the existing High Priority Structure will certainly be downgraded to Medium or Low when the next Inventory of Historic

Resources is done by a preservation professional applying state-wide accepted standards, and that is unfortunate.

In summary, I submit retaining the present approval provisions which have worked well for years will provide quicker more consistent decisions for applicants and adhere closer to accepted historic preservation standards than will the proposed change, which may have unexpected consequences that only surface over time.

**LOW PRIORITY STRUCTURES WITHIN A HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES** at least as relates to consideration for demolition. Structures attain historical significance not only due to architectural attributes but also due to association with historically significant people or events. Those who do the Inventory of Historic Resources see the physical attributes but may not have access to the historic significance of a particular structure which would dictate it should be preserved in the interest of the culture, prosperity, education and welfare of the people. Consequently, what should be categorized as High Priority may unintentionally be rated Low. By definition a historic structure has stood for 50 years or more and neighborhood memories may have faded, but a public notice, review by HARC, and the 60 day window before approval (which should be retained) may provide the spark to produce forgotten evidence of historic importance which could lead to re-categorization as a High Priority and thus preservation or relocation.

Therefore, I submit that HARC should be the decision-making party for all demolitions of historic structures within a Historic Overlay District. I did not hear anyone say an objective of these proposed changes was to hasten demolitions. Once gone a structure cannot be brought back, so public review is appropriate to avoid mistakes.

**CONFLICTING GUIDELINES SHOULD BE ADDRESSED IN THIS REVIEW.** When the subject of “Concerns about HARC” was raised last Spring there was much discussion about apparently arbitrary decisions by HARC and confusion among applicants, possibly related to inconsistent guidelines, which together diminished the attractiveness of Georgetown as a place to invest. Now with these historic preservation issues on the table it would be remiss not to take the opportunity to identify and resolve conflicting guidelines and criteria. There are complex issues of compatibility, relating to mass, shape and setbacks of proposed new buildings in the Historic Overlay Districts, which require prioritization, trade-offs and compromises, particularly in transition areas. Given that one stated duty of HARC is “to act and assist City Council in formulating design guidelines and other supplemental materials relevant to historic preservation or design review” and given that these guidelines and criteria are within the UDC, I submit that while dealing with these UDC Amendments, the UDC Advisory Committee should solicit advice from the current HARC Commissioners. Most of the current members have at least one year of experience on HARC and who better to bring forward suggestions for guideline improvements that would help resolve conflicting objectives, and render the sometimes difficult decisions they must make more easily reached and explained? It is clear from the signs around town that HARC has community support and it should be important for City Council to do whatever can be done to maximize the credibility of HARC. Accordingly, I request that advice on guidelines should be solicited from HARC with a view to making this review process as thorough and comprehensive as possible, before these proposed amendments are moved forward. If the UDC Advisory Committee is not in a position make that request perhaps City Staff or the City Council would do so.

Sofia, thank you again for your efforts and transparency on this process. I hope you will treat this as though it was submitted on your comment form and share it with everyone appropriate.

I plan to share it with others also.

Respectfully,

Allan Barnes



Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Jimmy Johnson](#)  
**To:** [GRP UDC](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed changes to UDC Sect 2.50.040  
**Date:** Thursday, March 7, 2019 5:34:56 PM

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It is unbelievable that the initial proposal to streamline the approval process for the historical district could possibly end up with an additional step for Council approval. This is not streamlining the process. This is merely removing HARC from the process. It has become very clear in previous appeals that the council will vote their will regardless of HARC or P & Z recommendations. In other words, we are about to create a process that allows the council to ignore the UDC process entirely. This is an unbelievable recommendation. It is a major step back for all of Georgetown and a travesty for the citizens of Georgetown. The Council is supposed to be the representatives of the citizens, not a higher authority with no regard for the wishes of the citizens. The HARC was created to provide a knowledgeable body to review and approve projects in the historical district. This proposal takes that authority away and allows a group of unqualified politicians to make critical decisions without any real understanding of the codes approved by the citizens of Georgetown.

This proposal is a travesty. It is rivaled only by the underhanded way the council and city handled the energy contracts.

Jim Johnson  
3005 Parker Dr.  
Georgetown, TX 78628

**Caution: This email is not from the City of Georgetown.**

**To:** [GRP UDC](#)  
**Cc:** [Sofia Nelson](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] UDC Advisory Committee Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 13, 2019 8:14:12 AM  
**Attachments:** [March 13 2019 UDC Adv Comm Comments.pdf](#)

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Good morning.  
Please find attached my comments regarding the proposed UDC amendment changes.  
Thank you for your consideration.  
Susan

Susan Firth  
1403 Olive Street

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March 12, 2019

Please find below my comments regarding the proposed UDC changes.

- Review Authority Change
  - Recommend approval of authority change from HARC to CC
    - With the assurance that City Council approvals require a public hearing (not consent agenda) to allow applicants and community to address pending COAs
    - With the understanding by Council/explanation to Council that the timeline for COA approvals will be significantly longer (not 'a faster turnaround' per Mr. Pitts original statement) and result in a lengthened process and additional financial burden to the applicant
    - Clarify the Appeal Process of a Council decision
- Review of Low Priority
  - Restore oversight of Demolition of Low Priority structures to HARC
    - Require Demolition of any Low Priority structure within the Downtown and Old Town Overlay district or properties on the Historic Resource Survey to COA HARC review
  - Request/require the University-Elm National Register Historic District expand its boundaries per recommendation of 2017 Historic Resource Survey consultants Cox-McClain allowing maximum protection of the integrity of the District
- Review of Demolition Process Outside of Historic District
  - Require public notification of Demolition of structures outside historic district
  - Properties listed on the Historic Resource Survey would be subject to HARC approval
- Use of In-Kind Materials
  - Approve with the stipulation that the physical appearance of the structure is not altered; for example, if using Hardi board the size & profile of the material must match the original siding material

In addition, please consider recommending

- Expansion of the Old Town Overlay boundaries
  - West (to the river); East (to Southwestern Blvd); South (to 1460/Quail Valley); North (to the river)
  - Allows for awareness of historic properties
    - TRG/The Ridge (Scenic Drive)
    - Haven (south of 17<sup>th</sup> Street)
    - San Jose area (south of 17<sup>th</sup> Street)
    - Nolen Addition (east of Hutto Road, south of 17<sup>th</sup> Street)
- Require Public Notification of HARC COA Conceptual Reviews

Thank you for your consideration.

Kind regards,

Susan Firth  
1403 Olive Street

**From:** [Chelsea Irby](#)  
**To:** [Sofia Nelson](#); [Nathaniel Waggoner](#); [Madison Thomas](#)  
**Cc:** [Andreina Davila](#)  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] Comments on HARC Proposal  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 12, 2019 10:35:06 AM

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FYI

**Chelsea Irby**  
Senior Planner  
City of Georgetown  
512-931-7746

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**From:** Grace Josey [redacted]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 12, 2019 10:25 AM  
**To:** GRP\_UDC <UDC@georgetown.org>  
**Cc:** District1 <district1@georgetown.org>; District2 <district2@georgetown.org>; District3 <district3@georgetown.org>; District4 <district4@georgetown.org>; District5 <district5@georgetown.org>; District6 <district6@georgetown.org>; District7 <district7@georgetown.org>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comments on HARC Proposal

Thank you for considering my comments regarding the proposed UDC amendments pertaining to HARC, as listed in the March 10 issue of the Williamson County Sun.

I am a lifelong Georgetown resident, and have been a homeowner in the historic overlay district for the past nine years. I have been through HARC and have remodeled my home.

First and foremost, I would like to remind the members of the Council that Old Town is not only an asset to our community, it is also our neighborhood. This is the place where we live, work, and send our children to school. It is not just a place for the City of Georgetown to market itself, attract out-of-towners, and encourage development. I ask this question to members of the Council who live outside of my neighborhood: How would you feel if individuals from other neighborhoods could sit on your HOA Board and make decisions about your neighbors installing above ground pools, sheds, additions, etc.? Would you feel like those individuals could have the same invested interest as you? Probably not. I am incredibly grateful for the service of my neighbors on HARC. It is a major time commitment, and they do their very best to make decisions in the interest of their neighbors within the parameters of the process. I think that giving the power to the Council to approve/deny Certificates of Appropriateness is bad for our neighborhood. Not only would those decisions be left in the hands of individuals living outside our neighborhood, but it will mean that the decisions are less informed. The members of HARC spend tremendous amounts of time reviewing the documents for each project and reviewing the UDC. Will members of Council have the same time to give? I doubt it.

Second, while I do agree that changes could be made for non-contributing and low-priority structures, they are still located near medium- and high-priority homes. It would propose that these structures be reviewed by staff, but only by HARC if the owner is requesting variances or demolition.

Lastly, I agree with the proposal to allow low- and medium-priority structures to be remodeled with similar replacement materials.

I understand that realtors and developers stand to profit in the short run from lower standards in my neighborhood. Maybe some of those developers have appealed to members of the Council to make these changes. I think that is unfortunate. There is always room to improve a process, and I believe there are

ideas that have been mentioned that would significantly improve the HARC process. In fact, I sat in a focus group where homeowners and one home builder proposed lots of great enhancements while still placing the COA decision in the hands of the HARC members. Let's look at those ideas and find ways to improve without undermining those who choose to live in the district.

With appreciation,

Grace Pyka  
1318 East Universtiy Ave.

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**From:** [Chelsea Irby](#)  
**To:** [Nathaniel Waggoner](#); [Sofia Nelson](#); [Madison Thomas](#)  
**Cc:** [Andreina Davila](#)  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] Super majority  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 12, 2019 1:58:13 PM

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FYI

Chelsea Irby  
Senior Planner  
City of Georgetown  
512-931-7746

-----Original Message-----

From: Karalei Nunn [redacted]  
Sent: Tuesday, March 12, 2019 1:52 PM  
To: GRP\_UDC <UDC@georgetown.org>  
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Super majority

I support a super majority from the council to overturn HARC decisions. This aligns with the Planning and Zoning body decisions and makes sense. It does not make sense to further reduce HARC's authority.

Karalei Nunn

Caution: This email originated from outside the City of Georgetown. Do not click links or open attachments unless you know the content is safe.

**From:** [Michael Walton](#)  
**To:** [Sofia Nelson](#); [GRP UDC](#); [Preservation Georgetown](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Preservation Georgetown Comments on UDC  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 12, 2019 9:27:28 PM

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Sofia --

I respectfully submit the following comments from Preservation Georgetown:

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As the President of Preservation Georgetown, I have had the opportunity to meet with and hear from a variety of people about this proposal.

In general, the preference is to leave things as they are, but it is clear that is not a likely option.

So, after significant review & discussion ... and as the representative of the 300+ members of Preservation Georgetown, I offer the following recommendations and requests:

1 - Adjust the proposal in Sec. 3.13.010. - Applicability, to restore the review of LOW priority structures for demolition.

While there are certainly structures in Old Town that are beyond repair and are legitimate candidates for demolition, not all of those classified as LOW priority are.

The concern is that removing all review will result in widespread demolition in favor of new construction that may not maintain the character, personality, and historic interests of Georgetown.

2 - Review Section Sec. 3.03.020. - Required Public Hearing

The table in the proposal indicates a special symbol under the City Council column for COA applications, but the specification of that symbol has been removed.

The requirements for this section are not clear and thus should be updated.

3 - Clarify SECTION 16.02. - DEFINITIONS for Historic Structure, Contributing and Historic Structure, Non-Contributing

The historic survey rates structures as LOW, MEDIUM, and HIGH based upon the historic significance of the structure and its level of alterations or adjustments.

It is our opinion that while a LOW priority structure may not retain its original appearance, it may still be a CONTRIBUTING structure.

It is important that this definition is written in a way to recognize all structures that add value to the community, independent of their level of historic rating.

#### 4 - Remove or edit conflicting language from the UDC

It has been said that part of the problem is ambiguity and the level of subjectivity that may be applied to HARC decisions. This should be addressed as part of this effort.

For example, chapters 6 (residential development standards) & 7 (non-residential development standards) of the UDC have caused issues for property owners within the historic overlays.

As written, they are easily applied to properties outside of these districts, but cause problems when applied to properties subject to HARC review.

The proposed changes to the UDC that you have been asked to review do not include updates to these or any other chapters that may introduce challenges.

We ask that you recommend that a review and update of these sections be included in this proposal.

Finally, we support the updates related to in-kind materials.

--

Michael J Walton Georgetown, TX

Caution: This email originated from outside the City of Georgetown. Do not click links or open attachments unless you know the content is safe.

**From:** [Liz Weaver](#)  
**To:** [GRP UDC](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Proposed changes to HARC  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 13, 2019 10:32:40 AM

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I strongly oppose the proposed changes to the UDC which will affect the workings of HARC. In particular, I object to the removal of the provision that requires a supermajority vote in order for the Council to override a HARC decision. This supermajority provision is in place for the Planning and Zoning Commission, and I think it is reasonable for HARC to also have this provision. Both bodies are appointed in the same manner, and both are made up of citizens of the town. To give one superior power than the other is not warranted; it sends the message that one body is trusted more than the other.

I also object to the proposed removal of the demolition of low-priority structures from the review of HARC. HARC serves as an important check on interests which strive to tear down and replace historic structures. As a researcher for Preservation Georgetown, I'm constantly surprised at the richness of history that lies within all the structures in town. Removing HARC's oversight of demolition of these structures is not in the interest of maintaining and celebrating that richness. The number of low-priority structures within the overlays is relatively small in comparison with all the property in Georgetown, and it deserves to be protected.

Thanks,  
Liz Weaver  
1221 S Main Street

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

**Caution: This email originated from outside the City of Georgetown. Do not click links or open attachments unless you know the content is safe.**

**From:** [John & Scherry Chapman](#)  
**To:** [GRP UDC](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] UDC changes  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 13, 2019 11:44:47 AM

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I am writing to ask that you do not make changes to the HARC being responsible for decision making on both the Historic Square and Old town overlay additions, restorations of buildings and houses. HARC receives training and are appointed by the council. I believe the council has a great many items to review and that they are elected to represent all of Georgetown. The majority of people who move here and pay taxes here are because of the Historic quality of the square and charming neighborhoods.

Please do not let the area grow into one big parking lot with buildings not compatible to those original design.

Sincerely,

Scherry Chapman

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**From:** [Peter H. Dana](#)  
**To:** [GRP UDC](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] UDC and HARC Meeting 3/13/2019  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 13, 2019 6:01:06 PM  
**Attachments:** [HARC3132019.docx](#)

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If it is not too late please consider the written comments attached and pasted below that reflect my comments to the board this afternoon.

Thank you

Peter H. Dana, Ph.D.



Peter Dana, 1101 Walnut St.

The last time I was able to attend a City Council Meeting, the Council overruled the Historic and Architectural Review Commission decision on a project just off the square at the junction of the Downtown Overlay District and the Old Town Overlay District.

The members of the city council asked questions of the applicant and staff and proceeded to make numerous suggestions and modifications during the meeting and then voted to approve the project with the changes and applicant assurances that had been made during the previous hour. This seems antithetical to the premise of preserving the Square and Old Town through careful review and consideration of proposals by a commission chosen from qualified applicants with specific skills in historic preservation, architecture, and development.

The City Code of Ordinances specifies the qualifications for HARC appointees who then undergo a training program in the UDC and HARC procedures.

The Code requires that:

Whenever possible, the HARC shall include a majority of persons from each of the following categories having a demonstrated interest in the downtown area or skills in design review, with a maximum of two from each category:

1. Licensed architect;
2. Landscape architect, professional planner or urban designer;
3. Historian or person with expertise in historic preservation;
4. Developer, contractor or realtor; and
5. Property owner or non-owner tenant within the Downtown Overlay District.

C. Individual members of the commission may meet one or more of the categories above. Citizens at large with an interest in historic preservation or urban design shall be appointed to the commission to fill any remaining appointments.

How are we, the voters, going to select City Council Candidates for the seven separate and diverse districts in such a way as to insure that the the City Council as a whole has the necessary qualifications to make the kinds of detailed, complex, and time-consuming reviews necessary to make appropriate decisions with respect to the responsibilities now undertaken by HARC in historic Georgetown?

Please respect the autonomy and authority of HARC as it is now constituted.

**Caution: This email originated from outside the City of Georgetown. Do not click links or open attachments unless you know the content is safe.**

Peter Dana, 1101 Walnut St.

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Please respect the autonomy and authority of HARC as it is now constituted.

**From:** [Huston, Michael](#)  
**To:** [GRP UDC](#)  
**Cc:** [District1](#); [District6](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] HARC and UDC  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 13, 2019 2:41:11 PM

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Concerns about HARC and UDC

March 13, 2019

We have lived in Georgetown, in the Historic District, for about a year and a half. We love our neighborhood and our neighbors, who also value the strong zoning regulations that protect our quality of life and preserve the value of our homes.

We are very concerned by the recent proposal by some members of City Council who want to change the Unified Development Code to demote HARC to an advisory board, and let City Council make the final decision about the acceptability of remodeling and construction project in the Historic District. While we have confidence in the elected council members from the Historic District, we have little confidence in the City Council members from outside the Historic District who want to take control from HARC, and make development decisions that are not in the best interests of the residents of the Historic District. Some City Council members are major property owners in town and have other businesses that may lead to conflicts of interest in the decisions they make with regard to the UDC and HARC.

It is clear to anyone who knows anything about the history of Georgetown that our spectacular town square and the charming neighborhoods around it are not the results of City Council decisions, but rather the results of the vision and hard work of Georgetown residents who saw the threat of unregulated development to Georgetown's unique historic neighborhoods. Their vision led to the formation of HARC and its predecessor boards and organizations, which succeeded because of the hard work and expertise of citizens who valued the unique character of our city. It is obvious that without the persistence and hard work of the citizens who served and serve on the HARC Board and its predecessors, Georgetown would be an undistinguished, haphazardly developed town like its neighbors along the I-35 corridor.

HARC is critical to maintaining the unique character of Georgetown. We are opposed to the demotion of HARC to an Advisory Board with no power to make final decisions about architectural standards in the Historic District. The UDC should not be altered to demote HARC. We have no more confidence in the City Council to properly manage the Historic Districts of Georgetown, than to openly and honestly manage the City's electrical system.

Michael and Mary Ann Huston

Church Street

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**From:** [Ann Seaman](#)  
**To:** [GRP UDC](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] HARC  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2019 4:26:03 PM  
**Attachments:** [To UDC March 15, 2019.docx](#)

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Dear Committee members, I sent this letter through the Planning Department and now I've found there is a direct UDC email address. Just in case you didn't receive my letter timely, I'm sending it again.

Many thanks,  
Ann Seaman

[Ann Seaman](#)

[www.annseaman.com](http://www.annseaman.com)

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March 15, 2019

Dear Messrs. Garner, Philpott, Robinson, Wanke, Wirth, and Stevens, and Ms. Dubcak,

I am writing to urge you to leave HARC as it is, and to recognize how specious the argument for changing it is.

HARC is not blocking Georgetown's growth. HARC's remit is just the Old Town overlay and Old Downtown district, and only as far as application of the Old Town Design Guidelines are concerned.

All an applicant has to do is offer a project that fits those guidelines.

But that might not allow for the most lucrative outcome. Solution? Get rid of HARC.

What HARC is blocking is an easier path for developers to make money off of what HARC itself has helped create — namely, our unique downtown. That is the sole reason we're here going through this exercise.

It should be harder to develop in our Downtown. HARC is the only reason we have a charming downtown — which is used and treasured by our entire city, and by residents of other nearby towns and cities.\* We all own Downtown, in a sense.

HARC was deliberately given ruling power, while other boards were only made advisory. That is to keep it free of political influence, because it's so important to Old Town's character.

All cities across the country have such bodies. They are always under attack. When they're crippled as proposed here, we rapidly have what has happened in other cities whose "HARC"s were eclipsed by political decisions.\*\*

The current Council is top-heavy with members who favor developers' interests; this bloc consistently votes against the wishes of our citizens regarding HARC matters.

The bloc can ignore the scores of elderly citizens who pack the chamber, waiting hours for a chance to beg them not to destroy HARC. It can ignore hundreds of HARC signs in yards all over the city. It can ignore a petition signed by 600 people favoring HARC. It can ignore the surveys that favored HARC.

None of the bloc members live in Old Town.

Staff recommendations reflect what the Council's voting bloc wants. They do not come across as objective criteria. It's not staff's fault. They want to keep their

jobs.

Staff gave the public only 6 days, including a weekend, to inspect the complex new HARC language before the UDC committee met to vote on it March 13. Still, the committee was very astute, and on that day, Mr. Philpott had to twice request to see the four citizen surveys, which showed approval of HARC in the 90th percentiles.

Like the Council, the city's advisory boards and committees are reportedly heavy with pro-development members, many of whom who aren't aware of the role of HARC in preserving our downtown.

There have been only three appeals to circumvent HARC in the past four years, and two of those were overturned.

All three regarded commercial (i.e., development) issues downtown.

The one that wasn't overturned was green-lighted by the current Council voting bloc, which passed it with UDC violations.

When de-fanging HARC first came before Council, several members said they didn't want the extra work; they needed HARC to guide them.

They were outvoted by the bloc. No one on the Council need do any extra work, as long as there's a bloc with a rubber stamp.

Without HARC, no applicant will need to agree with HARC or take its advice. All he/ she will have to do is sit through the mandated HARC review and then take the project to the Council voting bloc with few or no changes.\*\*\*

The proposed changes to HARC would not "streamline" an applicant's project. If an applicant has an issue with Council's decision, under the new language, he/ she will be delayed because of the extra time it will take to appeal and then go through the next Council meeting, plus the extra time required for adequate public notice.

And the proposed change doesn't even contain a way to appeal a Council decision as it is.

We need HARC as it is. If HARC has flaws, they can be fixed. This entire exercise is unnecessary.

Thank you for taking more time on this. Thank you for giving it more thought. Thank you for asking for more information. Thank you for hearing us.

Sincerely,  
Ann Seaman

Ann Seaman



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\*I have friends from Temple, Cedar Park, and Volente meeting me downtown next Wednesday for lunch. Why aren't we all meeting in Temple? Cedar Park, Volente? Your vote affects an entire region, not just Old Town.

\*\*We need look no further than 6th Street Austin, once charming, and under design guidelines, now a urine-drenched wasteland by day, and a nightmare for downtown livability.

\*\*\*As happened with the WishWell approval by the present Council voting bloc.

**From:** [k. stallark](#)  
**To:** [Andreina Davila](#); [WEB Planning](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] re. HARC and development in general: Please share with UDCA Commission before their next meeting  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2019 1:08:42 PM

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Dear Ms. Davila-Quintero and Ms. Nelson:

I am writing to plead with the Commission to save HARC - Georgetown is only the desirable community that it is because of HARC and the forward and long-term thinking that they have done and continue to do. HARC is our golden goose - don't strangle her.

Also, in terms of future planning and the need for density, I hope Georgetown will not follow Austin and allow buildings to be constructed right up to the sidewalks, but **rather trade a bit of additional height in return for setbacks that provide adequate space for greenery and trees**. An example of this "built right to edge with no greenery" is the apartment complex near El Monumento. It's interesting architecturally, but it left no space for greenery and trees between the buildings and the street.

Not only will requiring more setback and green space prevent excessive runoff/flooding, but it will also keep Georgetown cooler during the intense summer heat. **And the added "nature" is good for citizen health.** Please see the attached snippet from a university study that showed that people living with nature and greenery around them had lower levels of stress hormones and other chemicals that are associated with heart health and disease.

Thank you,  
Kathryn Stallard (former chair Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee - way back in the 90s)

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that calorie levels were similar in Brazil, India, Ghana, and Finland, and slightly lower in China.  
Source: BMJ, Dec. 12, 2018.



## The Nature Cure

People living with the most trees, grass, and other greenery around them had lower levels of the stress hormone epinephrine than those in less green neighborhoods, a University of Louisville study found. They also had lower

levels of compounds that damage cells and higher levels of blood cells that help repair artery linings. Don't live in a green area? Spending time in a local park or natural area can also have health benefits, other research shows.

Source: Journal of the American Heart Association, Dec. 5, 2018.

March 18, 2019

First and foremost, it is extremely important that I relate to you a conversation I had with Cox-McLain during an interview session to gather public insight to the 2016 Historic Resource Survey. I asked the consultants specifically their opinion of no oversight of Low Priority structures. Their response to me was, paraphrasing, in their experience in other communities; **the lack of review of Low Priority properties had a significant impact on the integrity of historic neighborhoods.**

Please find below my comments regarding the proposed UDC changes.

- Review Authority Change
  - **Recommend No Authority Change. Leave HARC as a governing commission with appeals to City Council.**
  - If the decision is to recommend approval of authority change from HARC to CC
    - **With the assurance that City Council approvals require a public hearing (not consent agenda) to allow applicants and community to address pending COAs**
    - With the understanding by Council/explanation to Council that the timeline for COA approvals will be significantly longer (not 'a faster turnaround' per Mr. Pitts original statement) resulting in a lengthened process & additional financial burden to the applicant
    - Clarify the Appeal Process of a Council decision
- Review of Low Priority
  - **Restore oversight of Demolition of Low Priority structures to HARC**
    - Require Demolition of any Low Priority structure within the Downtown and Old Town Overlay district or properties on the Historic Resource Survey to COA HARC review
  - **Require Public Notice of all demolition of Low Priority structures**
  - Request/require the University-Elm National Register Historic District expand its boundaries per recommendation of 2016 Historic Resource Survey consultants Cox-McLain allowing maximum protection of the integrity of the District
- Review of Demolition Process Outside of Historic District
  - **Require public notification of Demolition of structures outside historic district**
  - **Properties listed on the Historic Resource Survey would be subject to HARC approval**
  - Properties Outside of Historic District warrant protection
    - Per 2016 Historic Resource consultants Cox-McLain, 'a large portion of the City and its ETJ have never been surveyed. There are mid-century neighborhoods west of I-35 along Williams Dive that have not been documented in full but have potential for significance. The 1984 survey evaluated a small number of agricultural properties in the ETJ. CMEC historians observed many more historic-age agricultural properties outside of the survey boundary that have never been evaluated. These agricultural areas are under threat of encroaching development and should be documented before they are lost.'
- Use of In-Kind Materials
  - Approve with the stipulation that the physical appearance of the structure is not altered; for example, if using Hardi board the size & profile of the material must match the original siding material

In addition, please consider recommending

- Expansion of the Old Town Overlay boundaries
  - West (to the river); East (to Southwestern Blvd); South (to 1460/Quail Valley); North (to the river)
  - Allows for awareness of historic properties
    - TRG/The Ridge (Scenic Drive); Stone Haven (south of 17<sup>th</sup> Street); San Jose area (south of 17<sup>th</sup> Street); Nolen Addition (east of Hutto Road, south of 17<sup>th</sup> Street)
- Require Public Notification of HARC COA Conceptual Reviews

Thank you for your consideration.

Susan Firth  
1403 Olive Street