



Fan Overlay District

Why?

There are many aspects of the Fan that make it unique. But none stand out so clearly as its historic architecture. Although Monument Avenue, West Grace Street, and West Franklin Street have been designated Old and Historic Districts, the vast majority of the Fan is not covered by any protections against the demolition of historic structures or the introduction of new buildings that are inconsistent with architectural patterns and features of the Fan. The Fan Overlay District (FOD) Guidelines are designed to address this gap.

How were the FOD Guidelines developed?

In early 2016, the FDA conducted a survey in order to measure the interest of Fan residents in historic preservation within the Fan and the development of some measures that would protect the historic architectural character of the Fan. The results of the survey showed a strong interest in reasonable measures that would protect existing historic structures from demolition and ensure that new construction is architecturally compatible with the historic character of the neighborhood. Based on these survey results, a group of volunteer Fan residents made up of design professionals, architectural preservationists, and attorneys surveyed how other cities throughout the United States approached historic preservation and drafted and revised the FOD Guidelines, which can be found at: <https://tinyurl.com/mjtpc6e>.

What do the FOD Guidelines do?

The FOD Guidelines will apply only to demolition of existing historic structures and the construction of new structures in the Fan.

What do the FOD Guidelines NOT do?

The FOD Guidelines will NOT:

1. Require you do get approval before making changes, alternations, or renovations to your home or business
2. Limit or prohibit you from painting your home or business any color you want
3. Restrict your ability to make changes to your home like the Old and Historic requirements of Monument Avenue, West Grace Street, and West Franklin Street requirements do
4. Require that you only use certain materials when making alternations or renovations to your home or business

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THE FOD GUIDELINES DO NOT APPLY TO ALTERNATION OR RENOVATIONS. THEY ONLY APPLY TO DEMOLITION AND NEW CONSTRUCTION.

THE FOD GUIDELINES ARE DIFFERENT FROM AND NOT THE SAME AS THE “FAN ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION DISTRICT” THAT WAS PROPOSED IN 1999. In particular, the 1999 proposal sought to create an Old and Historic District like Monument Ave and West Grace and West Franklin Streets. The 1999 proposal regulated alternations and renovations. The FOD Guidelines do not apply to or regulate in any way alternations or renovations.

How will the FOD Guidelines work?

The City Code of Richmond, Virginia provides for the creation of a “design overlay district to “protect developed areas of the City characterized by uniqueness of established neighborhood character, architectural coherence and harmony, or vulnerability to deterioration.” City Code § 30-940. The Code requires that each overlay district have its own specific design guidelines and that a Certificate of Approval be obtained from the City Urban Design Committee prior to undertaking any work that is covered by the guidelines. Since the FOD Guidelines apply only to demolition and new construction, a Certificate of Approval will be needed only for those activities.

What are the “Recommendations for Alterations to Existing Structures” at the end of the Guidelines?

The Committee included “Recommendations” for alternations. It is the hope of the FDA that property owners, in the spirit of mutual respect, good taste, and the common goal of preserving the unique aspect of the Fan that makes it so special, will adhere to them when making alterations or renovations. But these recommendations are aspirational in nature only and a Certificate of Approval will not be required in order to make alternations to your property.

What are the next steps?

The City Code sets forth a process that must be followed in order to create a design overlay district. See City Code § 30-940.4. This includes preparing and filing with the Director of the Department of Planning and Development Review a written report, holding a public information meeting, and soliciting the approval of the property owners within the overlay district. The FDA will be working through this process over the next few months.

How can you help?

Please read the FOD Guidelines, ask any questions you have about them, share you input about them, and work with us to implement them.