Using Historic Preservation to Maintain Neighborhood Diversity
Atlanta’s Poncey-Highland Historic District

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Senior Principal
TSW

Douglas Young
Assistant Director
Office of Design, Historic Preservation Division
City of Atlanta
A larger region.

A larger city.

A lot more people.
THE ATLANTA CITY DESIGN

700,000 new residents by 2040

Core Values
- Equity
- Progress
- Access
- Ambition
- Nature

Growth

Conservation
RECENT GROWTH

Growth Corridors
- Ponce de Leon Avenue

Atlanta BeltLine
Eastside Streetcar Extension by 2027
A Different Kind of Historic District

Douglas Young
“As we begin to design our future, the intrinsic value of Progress will be realized only when we stand up for people and places that have meaning…”

- Atlanta City Design
PRESERVATION CONTEXT

1920s - 1950s neighborhood with historic residential, commercial, institutional and industrial buildings. Neighborhood leaders wanted to see if they could use an existing historic preservation/zoning tool to respect neighborhood history and promote flexibility.
SUBAREAS AND CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

More than 350 people actively engaged in the process. Working group of 10 met for 8 weeks in the summer of 2019. Neighborhood-led building inventory, history research, and “walk and talks”.
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

14 meetings and workshops, attended by 30-70 people each. Multiple small group and one-on-one meetings and Q & A interactions.

Four supplemental surveys completed by up to 170 individuals.
3D MODELING

Sites with significant disconnect between built development and zoning potential.

Intended to convey abstract zoning ideas (e.g. FAR, height, height planes).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Zoning-Related Topic</th>
<th>&quot;Regular&quot;/Base Zoning</th>
<th>Design Districts/Form-Based Code</th>
<th>Potential Poncey-Highland Framework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Types of Uses</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Special Uses</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setback from Property Lines</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of Parking</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architectural Form</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architectural Style</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Context&quot;/Comparison to other Buildings</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation / Focus</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian Features</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Design / Location</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention of Historic Features</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention of Demolitions</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = Can only occur in City of Atlanta Historic or Landmark District
SURVEY - USE AND FORM

Density and height
- Framed around protecting the historic core but allowing high density along corridors to support transit, walkable retail, and housing needs

“Missing Middle”
- Existing and new

Accessory Dwelling Units
- Existing and new
SURVEY - MODIFICATIONS

Painting brick
Replacing windows
Changing façades
Modern materials
Maintenance
Costs
SURVEY - ADDITIONS

Explored for all types of contributing buildings
- Varied by subarea

Vertical extents

Horizontal extends

Design
- Relation to historic portion
- Façade composition
- Material
Q5 Should additions to single-family houses have to look like the existing house?

Answered: 37  Skipped: 0

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NEVER</th>
<th>IN SPECIAL CASES</th>
<th>SOMETIMES</th>
<th>USUALLY</th>
<th>ALWAYS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>WEIGHTED AVERAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(no label)</td>
<td>27.03%</td>
<td>8.11%</td>
<td>13.51%</td>
<td>37.84%</td>
<td>13.51%</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Never  In special cases  Sometimes  Usually  Always  Total  Weighted average
SURVEY - NEW CONSTRUCTION

Varied by subarea

Design
- Massing
- Façade composition
- Materials
ALL NEW BUILDINGS

Standards apply in the Lot Compatibility Zone:

- Allows alterations and additions to be compatible with their style, or other historic buildings or contextual design; and
- Does not require use of contextual materials under “contextual” designs.
ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Allows window replacement.
Does not allow painted masonry.
Allows upper story additions that are set back at least 10 feet from front façade.
ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS TO NON-HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Requires design to be compatible with their style but does not require a specific style.
Requires the first three stories along public streets to be faced in brick, brick veneer, stone, or masonry, or metal.
RESULTS OF NEIGHBORHOOD PRIORITIES

A different kind of historic district:
- Less stringent than many others;
- Customized use standards; and
- Customized form and design standards.

Focus on preserving neighborhood character, allowing compatible growth, and improving design.

Macro versus micro approach to review.

Historic preservation prioritized through preferred solutions incentives.
Different approaches based on the subarea’s existing characteristics and potential future.
District “Zoning” Functions

Caleb Racicot
FROM CONVENTIONAL ZONING TO HISTORIC DISTRICT
CODE MIGRATION

Maintained or increased density.
  - Flexible FAR

Consolidated different use-based districts with a common form.
Kept existing zoning conditions.
BUILDING TYPES

Created Atlanta’s first code organized around building type.

- Detached House
- Carriage House
- Cottage Court
- Townhouse
- Stacked Flat
- Shopfront
- Commercial Block
- Tower
- Civic
### BUILDING TYPES

**03/26/2020 DRAFT V.3.4**  
Sec. 16-20V.015 Building type standards.

(9) **Detached house standards.** The following applies to all detached houses.

**(a) Description**

A detached house is a small-scale, freestanding building, set back from the public street, elevated above the ground level and designed to facilitate residential uses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>(b) Building Density</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dwelling units per building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildings per lot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>(c) Building Massing and Active Uses (see Sec. 16-20V.015[18])</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building height</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street-facing facade width</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active use depth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>(d) Pedestrian Access (see Sec. 16-20V.015(19))</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entrance facing street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walkway width</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>(e) Building Elements (see Sec. 16-20V.015(20))</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Each detached house must provide a porch. The required porch must face the street.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>(f) Fenestration (see Sec. 16-20V.015(21))</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street-facing facades</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>(g) Parking Location</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No on-site parking is allowed between the building and the street. Garage doors must be located on the side or rear facades of the principal structure and may not face a public street.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BUILDING TYPES

03/26/2020 DRAFT V3.4
Sec. 16-20V.015 Building type standards.

(15) Commercial block standards. The following applies to all commercial blocks.

(a) Description

A commercial block is a multi-story building designed for a vertical mix of uses, with pedestrian-oriented ground floor retail or service uses and upper floor residential, hospitality, or office uses.

(b) Building Massing and Active Uses (see Sec. 16-20V.015(18))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building height</th>
<th>See subarea requirements for min. 7 stories max.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ground floor height (floor to floor)</td>
<td>16 ft. min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper floor height (floor to floor)</td>
<td>10 ft. min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street-facing façade width</td>
<td>150 ft. max.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active use depth</td>
<td>20 ft. min. and may not be dwelling units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of front lot width that must be abutted by a conforming commercial block</td>
<td>70% min., excluding transitional yards, existing alleys, and one new driveway</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(c) Pedestrian Access (see Sec. 16-20V.015(19))

Entrance facing street: Required for all ground floor tenant spaces along streets

Walkway width: 6 ft. min.

(d) Building Elements (see Sec. 16-20V.015(20))

Each individual tenant space facing a street must provide an awning/canopy.

(e) Fenestration (see Sec. 16-20V.015(21))

Street-facing ground floor facades: 70% min. area
Street-facing upper floor facades: 20% min. area per floor
Street-facing blank wall area: 20 ft. max. per floor

(f) Parking Location

No exterior on-site parking is allowed between the building and the street.
No interior, above-ground parking is allowed within 20 feet of a street-facing façade.

(g) Building Type Location

New commercial blocks or towers must front Ponce de Leon Avenue.
New commercial blocks or shopfronts must front North Highland Avenue.
FEWER NONCONFORMITIES

Setbacks
Coverage
Use
## SETBACKS

**Table 2: Poncey-Highland Historic District Development Controls Table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CR = Per the compatibility rule</th>
<th>SA 1 Residential Core</th>
<th>SA 2 BeltLine Residential</th>
<th>SA 3 N. Highland Mixed-use</th>
<th>SA 4 Ponce de Leon Mixed-use</th>
<th>SA 5 BeltLine Mixed-use</th>
<th>SA 6 Bon-Som Residential</th>
<th>SA 7 Freedom Park Transitional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Front</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>5 ft. min / 30 ft max.</td>
<td>5 ft min</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Side (detached houses, carriage houses)</td>
<td>3 ft. min.</td>
<td>3 ft. min.</td>
<td>0 ft min.</td>
<td>0 ft. min.</td>
<td>0 ft. min.</td>
<td>3 ft. min.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Side (all other building types)</td>
<td>7 ft. min.</td>
<td>7 ft. min.</td>
<td>0 ft. min.</td>
<td>0 ft. min.</td>
<td>0 ft. min.</td>
<td>7 ft. min.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rear (detached houses)</td>
<td>5 ft. min.</td>
<td>5 ft. min.</td>
<td>5 ft. min.</td>
<td>5 ft. min.</td>
<td>5 ft. min.</td>
<td>5 ft. min.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rear (carriage houses)</td>
<td>3 ft. min.</td>
<td>3 ft. min.</td>
<td>3 ft. min.</td>
<td>3 ft. min.</td>
<td>3 ft. min.</td>
<td>3 ft. min.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rear (all other building types)</td>
<td>7 ft. min.</td>
<td>7 ft. min.</td>
<td>5 ft. min.</td>
<td>5 ft. min.</td>
<td>5 ft. min.</td>
<td>7 ft. min.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3: Poncey Highland Subarea 1, 2, and 6 Lot Coverage Table

Lots of record in the indicated Subareas 1, 2, and 6 are subject to the following maximum lot coverages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lot of Record Size</th>
<th>SA 1 Residential Core</th>
<th>SA 2 BeltLine Residential</th>
<th>SA 6 Bon-Som Residential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4,499 sf or smaller</td>
<td>70% max.</td>
<td>80% max.</td>
<td>70% max.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,500 sf to 4,999 sf</td>
<td>68% max.</td>
<td>78% max.</td>
<td>68% max.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,000 sf to 5,499 sf</td>
<td>66% max.</td>
<td>76% max.</td>
<td>66% max.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,500 sf to 5,999 sf</td>
<td>64% max.</td>
<td>74% max.</td>
<td>64% max.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6,000 sf to 6,499 sf</td>
<td>62% max.</td>
<td>72% max.</td>
<td>62% max.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6,500 sf to 6,999 sf</td>
<td>60% max</td>
<td>70% max</td>
<td>60% max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,000 sf to 7,499 sf</td>
<td>58% max.</td>
<td>68% max.</td>
<td>58% max.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,500 sf to 7,999 sf</td>
<td>56% max.</td>
<td>66% max.</td>
<td>56% max.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8,000 sf to 8,499 sf</td>
<td>54% max.</td>
<td>64% max.</td>
<td>55% max.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8,500 sf to 8,999 sf</td>
<td>52% max.</td>
<td>62% max.</td>
<td>55% max.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,000 sf or larger</td>
<td>50% max.</td>
<td>60% max.</td>
<td>55% max.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
USES

“Missing-middle”
Accessory dwelling units
Small-scale industrial
STREETS CAPES

Retains previous requirements, except in a few cases
Retains current City policy prohibiting frontal parking lots. Eliminates parking requirements, establishes caps. Encourages unbundled parking, as provided by GA Law

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 6: Poncey-Highland Historic District Automobile Parking Requirements</th>
<th>Minimum Parking</th>
<th>Maximum Parking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, townhouse building types</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other residential uses</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>1.0 space for every one residential unit [1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresidential uses</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2.5 spaces for every 1,000 square feet of floor area [1]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table Notes**

[1] Parking provided above the maximum is only permitted as park-for-hire facilities that are available to the general public and conform to all use applicable use standards.
TRANSITIONS

Transitional height plane
Transitional buffers; or
Small residential buildings
INCLUSIONARY ZONING

Beltline Overlay

- 10% of rental units at or below 60% AMI; or
- 15% of rental units at or below 80% AMI; or
- Pay a one-time in-lieu fee
Adoption

Douglas Young
TIMELINES

Limited by law to 180 days from date of nomination

11th hour “surprises”

- Highland Inn demolition request
- Misinformation campaign
- Landlords encouraging tenants to vote “no”
PHNA VOTE AND…

Record turnout – nearly 15% of the neighborhood voted, 75% in support.
Item M.24 · Ordinance 20-O-1171

Z-20-15 A SUBSTITUTE ORDINANCE BY ZONING COMMITTEE TO AMEND THE 1982 ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA, AS AMENDED, SO AS TO CREATE A NEW CHAPTER TO BE ENTITLED 20V, PONCEY-HIGHLAND HISTORIC DISTRICT, PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 20 O...

Bond
YES
Farokhi
YES (S)
Ide
YES
Boone
YES
Westmoreland
YES
Brown
YES
Shook
ABSENT
Overstreet
YES
Dickens
YES
Winslow
YES
Matzigkeit
YES
Sheperd
YES
Smith
YES (M)
Archibong
YES
Hillis
YES

SEPTMBER 08, 2020

ATLANTA CITY COUNCIL

ABSTAIN - 0
NO VOTE - 1

ATL 26
KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE PONCEY-HIGHLAND DISTRICT

**Comprehensive:** addresses all zoning and development criteria in one place

**Flexible:** includes mixed-use, contemporary design, residential options

**Future-oriented:** a neighborhood preservation framework for the future

**Innovative:** incorporates best practices and “form-based code”

**Focused:** emphasizes overall historic character / historic buildings

**Grounded:** uses established historic preservation principles and concepts

**Vetted:** result of detailed and inclusive neighborhood discussions

**Grass-roots:** based on adopted Poncey-Highland Master Plan
Thank you!

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