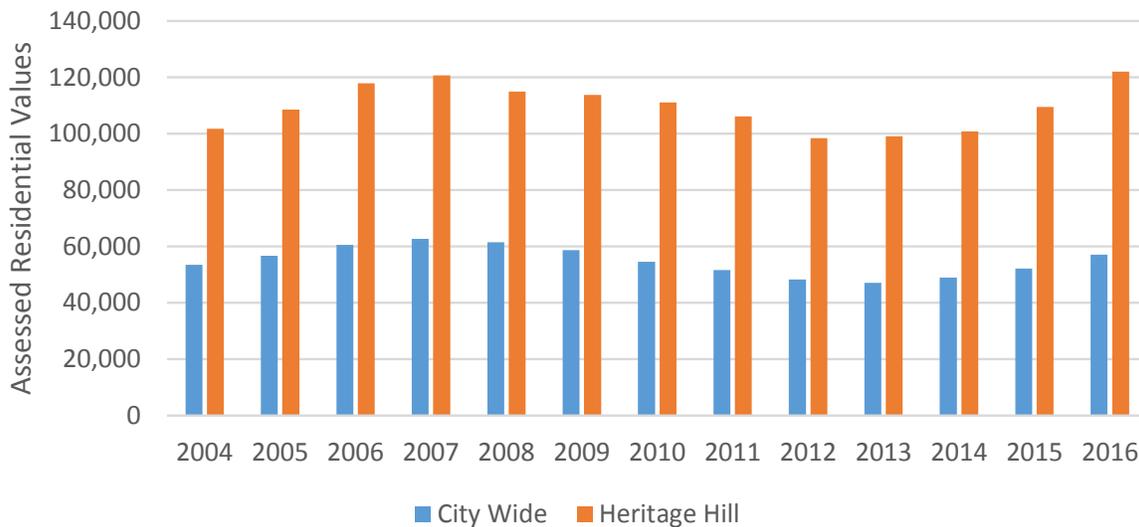


Historic Preservation Commission 2015 Annual Report



Preservation and the Community

Average Assessed Values

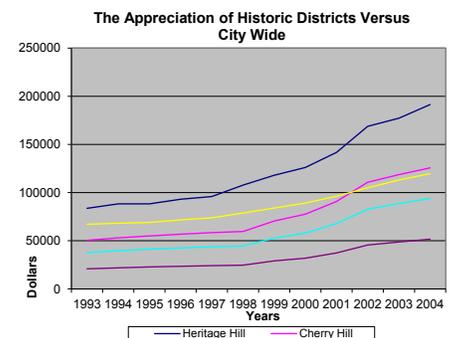


The financial benefits of Preservation have been well documented and touted across the country for several decades. Examples of preservation as an economic benefit and stabilizing tool abound in Grand Rapids, from the commercial warehouse district of Heartside to the residential district of Cherry Hill and more. These financial benefits to owners and community can be seen through higher property values and desirability of the neighborhoods by owners and investors. Many are familiar with the reports that have been written but few equate those to actual physical numbers and projects. To bring this discussion to a relatable and familiar level we will be utilizing more visuals within this report that encompass data and examples specifically from Grand Rapids.

The graph above illustrates the average assessed value for improved residential properties in the City of Grand Rapids and how they compare to those in the Heritage Hill Historic District. Over the past 13 years the average value of the historic structures has far exceeded that of improved properties located outside the historic district. It further illustrates that historic properties hold their value better and rebound quicker. The average improved neighborhood only saw an average growth of 6.91% while Heritage Hill experienced a 19.85% growth in the same amount of time.

The graph to the right illustrates the appreciation of property values in residential historic districts compared to city wide from 1993 to 2004.

Note that Heritage Hill has consistently held higher property values over the non-designated areas since before 1993. It also indicates that property values in the other historic districts began to increase dramatically over the next few years after designation. Fast forward 10+ years and one will find that Fairmount Square and Wealthy Street properties have exceeded the City average and that Wealthy Street is on the rise as one of the hottest real estate markets in the city.



The real estate market in the City is at an outstanding high with properties within the historic districts being among the hottest commodities. Properties are selling for record amounts and in a matter of hours and days. Within in the last couple of months there have been several homes to sell for prices well over \$400,000; 60 Lafayette NE & 339 College SE are both under contract, one for close to \$570,000 and the other for \$690,000. Properties that aren't even on the market, such as, Cherry Market, are receiving offers.



▲ **349 Robey Place SE** – This uninhabitable house was listed on March 9 and was sale pending by March 14 at a list price of \$35,000.

▶ **225 Henry SE** – This multi-unit was listed on February 18 and was sale pending by February 21 at a list price of \$167,000.



▲ **341 College SE** – Listed on March 3 and was sale pending the same day at a list price of \$229,800.



◀ **307 Union SE** – This single family house was listed on October 22 and was sale pending by October 27 at a list price of \$215,000.



Training and Education

Michigan Historic Preservation Network Session

Staff spoke at the Michigan Historic Preservation Network (MHPN) conference in May of 2015 in Midland Michigan. The MHPN Conference is a state-wide conference that is open to all interested attendees that wish to learn more about historic preservation. Staff spoke during a session involving eligibility, modern materials and modern architecture. The conference was very well attended and ran from Thursday through Saturday afternoon. The session was successful and as such MHPN has asked staff to return for another speaking engagement at the 2016 Conference in Detroit.



Commissioner Training

Each year staff organizes and leads a training workshop for the Grand Rapids Historic Preservation Commission. These training sessions are designed to update commissioners on new information, processes, legislation, resources and technology as well as address any concerns that may have arisen over the year. In

2015 the HPC experienced an usually large number of highly complex projects and inquiries and as such they held two training sessions for the entire body, at the request of the HPC. The first was a tour session with guest speaker Robbert McKay from the State Historic Preservation Office. During this session the group toured various types of neighborhoods including residential and commercial to discuss neighborhood context as well as infill standards.

The second session was the annual retreat held in November. During this session staff addressed issues commissioners had expressed interest in, such as, proper use of Notice to Proceed, Period of Significance, meeting procedures, and defensible decision making.

Renovations and Restorations Abound!



232 Morris SE after



232 Morris SE before

Not to be overshadowed by the impressive amount of new projects in the various historic districts; projects that focused on renovation and restoration of historic structures also thrived. The number of applications being pulled for repairs and restoration of historic buildings is on the rise illustrating the care being given to our existing housing stock. All projects have had positive impacts on their neighborhoods, property values, and quality of life.



756 Wealthy SE before



756 Wealthy SE after



1106 Wealthy after



1106 Wealthy before



22 Lafayette NE after



22 Lafayette NE before



(left) 19 Lafayette NE after and
(below) 19 Lafayette NE before





701 Wealthy SE

Projects Completed!

This year we saw several new construction projects and rehabilitation projects come to fruition. Of these projects were two owner occupied houses, one commercial addition, a community park, and a full house restoration.



263 Charles SE



260 Prospect SE

444 Union SE





1059 Wealthy SE

Through efforts of the developers group, citizen involvement and the HPC a community friendly infill project was approved for the old McDonald's site on Wealthy. This project looks to add five new buildings to the site that encompass residential and commercial uses, thus revitalizing a large underutilized void in the streetscape.



Coming soon, a substantial solar panel system on the roof of Brewery Vivant as part of the company's efforts to further their sustainability and green efforts.

Coming Soon!

Additionally, community involvement, conversations and approvals were held and given for several projects, all of which have the potential to add significant life to currently unutilized land and buildings in all of the historic districts.



12 Weston

▲ In 2015 we saw the demolition of two unsafe structures and approval for the erection of a multistory, mixed use building in the same location that will continue to define this important commercial corner and corridor.

◀ This parcel contains two houses that have been an eye sore to the neighborhood for decades. A new owner has been diligently working to restore both houses and we eagerly await their reintroduction to the neighborhood.

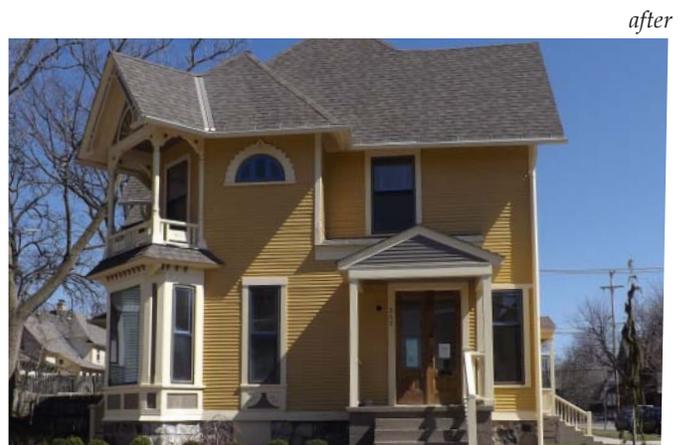
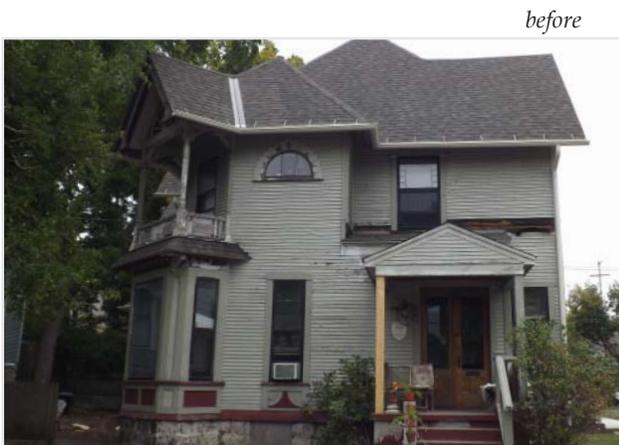


925 Wealthy SE

2016 HPC Award Winners



Residential Projects – Dennis Delano & Merritt Taylor – 230 Fountain NE



Residential Projects – Copper Hill Properties LLC – 262 Union SE



Group Projects – Westminster Presbyterian Church & Grand River Builders – 47 Jefferson SE

before



after



Commercial Projects – 616 Development – 16 Monroe Center NW

before



after



Commercial Projects
Northstone Mgmt LLC & Mariani Construction – 413 Eastern SE

before



after



Group Projects – Baker Lofts – 40 Logan SW

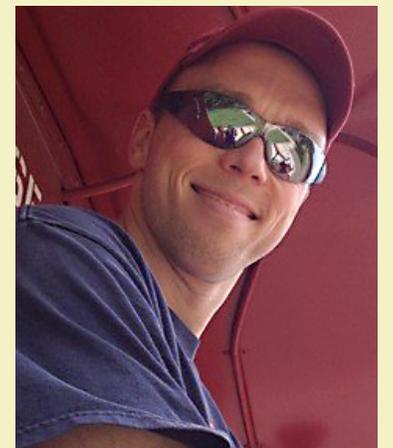
Special Recognition



Barry VanDyke



Kevin Doenier



John Leegwater

The Purpose of the HPC

1. Stabilize and improve property values in Historic Districts.
2. Strengthen the local economy.
3. Safeguard the Heritage of the City of Grand Rapids by preserving Historic Districts and Historic Landmarks that reflect elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political or architectural history.
4. Foster civic beauty.

These purposes were successfully served during 2015 through 304 decisions made by staff and the Commission. These decisions preserved the integrity of the structures and district while at the same time enabling practical changes which allow for economic use of historic buildings. The significant amount of investment in improvement and renovation of many buildings in the historic districts speaks to the impact of historic preservation on economic development.

HPC News

- Staff continues to partner with neighborhood associations, Midtown Craftsman & GRAR to create educational workshops.
- Staff continues to work alongside many others in our efforts to eliminate or minimize legislative Bill 5232.
- HPC bid fair well to commissioner Michael Clark as his family relocated out of state, he will be missed.
- HPC welcomed Chris Reader and Michael DeMaagd-Rodriguez; both have been an asset to the Commission and have had a very active first year of service. Warm welcome to both!

Statistical Information

Approved Applications

- The ratio of approved applications remained steady at an outstanding 96%. In 2015 the HPC and HP Staff approved 286 applications at first hearing and ten more at second hearing. The total approved applications reached 291 of the 304 received.

Applications Processed

- In the year 2015 the HPC and staff reviewed a total of 304 applications a substantial number for the year. A further testament to the stability, investment security, and desirability of the historic districts and the customer service provided.

HPC Reviewed Applications Per Historic District

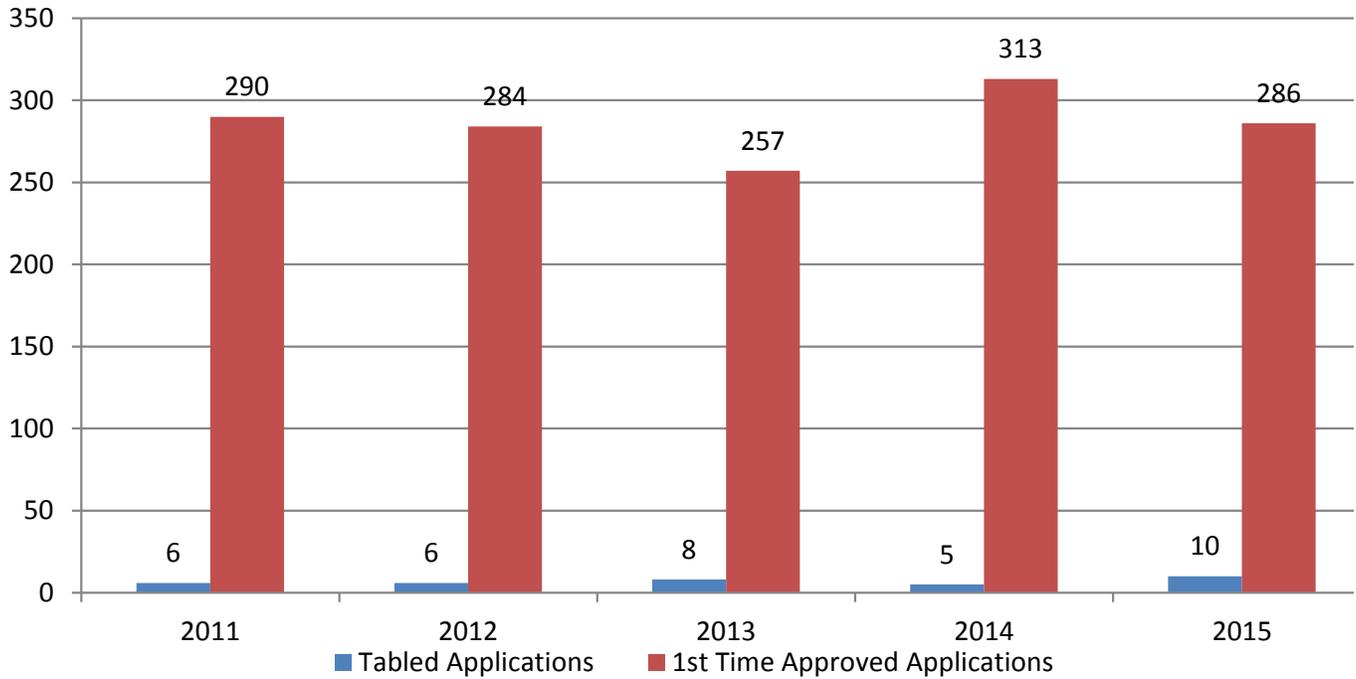
- Applications to the HPC from historic districts other than Heritage Hill held at 40% of the activity over the year.

Staff Approved Applications

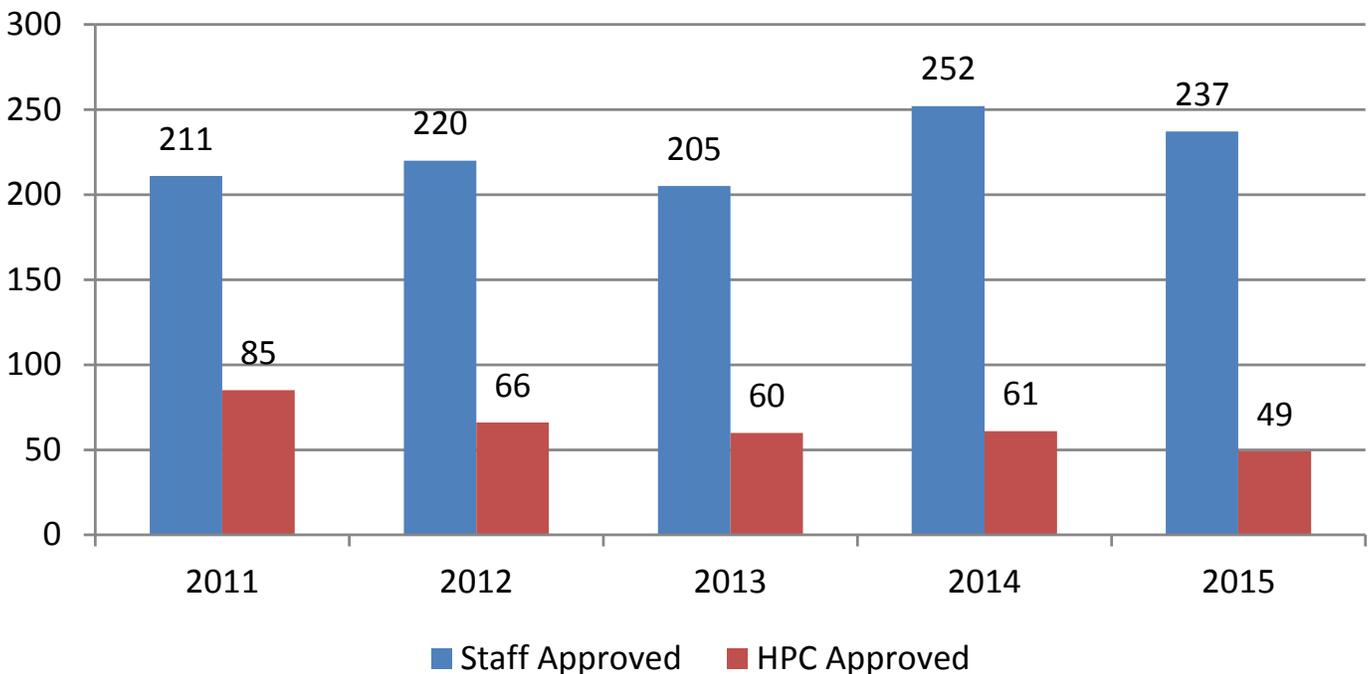
- Staff-approved applications are those that receive instant consideration and approval. Applicants utilize the one-stop convenience of the Development Center for review.

- A total of 1125 applications have been approved by staff over the past five years; 237 in 2015 alone.

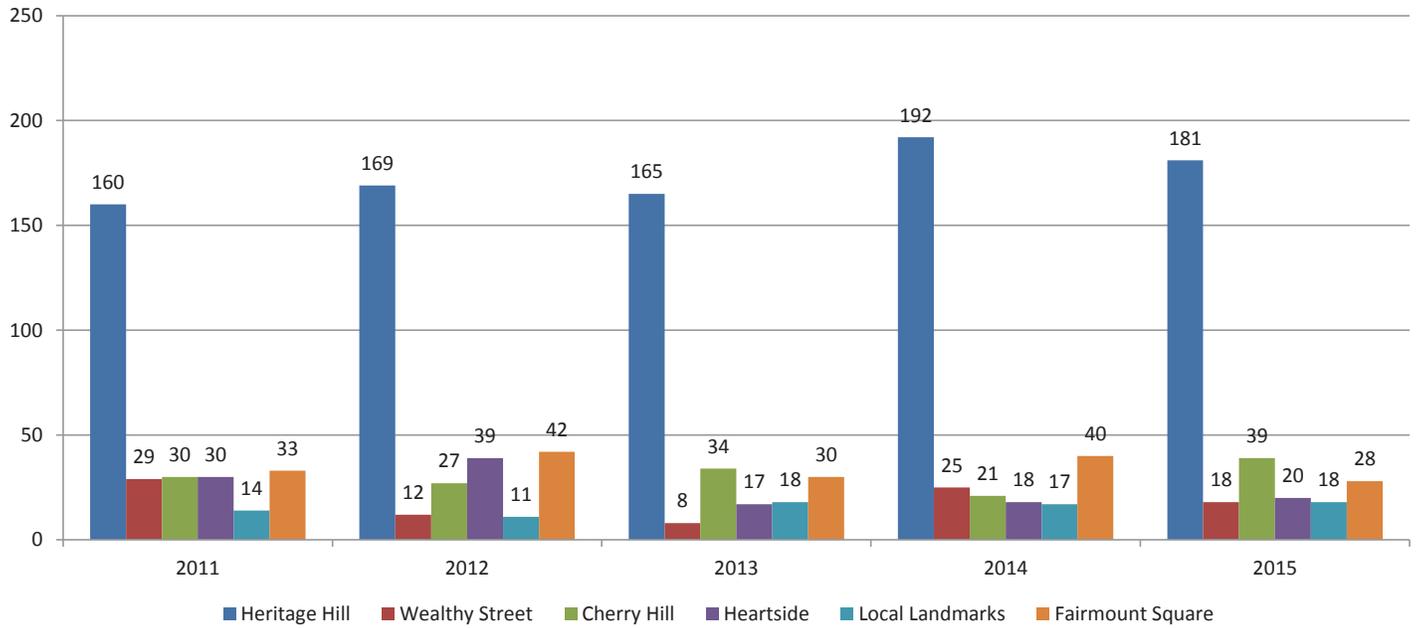
Customer Service Performance



Approved Applications Processed



Approved Applications Per Historic District



Approved Applications

