



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

March 2, 2020

Dear Joint City-County Planning Committee Members,

In 2019, Durham saw the loss of one of its historic landmarks, Paschall's Bakery and Studebaker Building, as a result of a tragic gas explosion. The Historic Preservation Commission mourned with the rest of its community over the loss of life that occurred as a result of this tragedy. The resulting damage to neighboring historic structures led to difficult decision-making by the Historic Preservation Commission in assessing the feasibility of restoration options with property owners. As a result of this tragedy and the resulting hearings, the Commission has a renewed appreciation for the Durham community and its commitment to not only preservation, but also compassion.

In the wake of the loss of these historic structures the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) continued to work diligently throughout the year to identify and protect Durham's historic properties. Beyond holding hearings for the creation of two new landmarks and review of 37 Major Certificates of Appropriateness, the HPC has also worked with staff to revise the Historic Properties Local Review Criteria. These revisions ensure that the Commission is not only meeting its goals of preservation but also allowing residents within historic districts the ability to meet the goals of the elected bodies, including but not limited to affordable housing initiatives and environmental initiatives.

In addition to the business mentioned above, the HPC also sent out an informational mailer to all owners of properties in Historic Districts. These yearly mailers serve to remind owners of the importance of historic preservation and the opportunities they have to work with the HPC to improve their properties while respecting the integrity of the historic character of their community.

With the fast pace at which Durham has been developing over the last decade, preservation and protection of our historic resources continues to play a critical role in maintaining Durham's sense of place. We look forward to continuing our work in this mission.

Thank you for your continued support,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Hamilton".

Katie Hamilton, Chair