

Title 15 ► Chapter 7

Historic Preservation

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Sec. 15-7-1 Declaration of Public Policy and Property.

The Village Board hereby declares as a matter of public policy that the protection, preservation, perpetuation and use of places, areas, buildings, structures and other objects having special historical, community or aesthetic interest or value is a public advantage and is promoted in the interest of the people. The purpose of this Chapter is to:

- (a) Safeguard the cultural resources of the Village of Merrilan by preserving sites, structures, landmarks and districts which reflect elements of the Village's cultural, social, economic, political, visual or architectural history.
- (b) Protect and enhance the Village's attractions to visitors and residents, and serve as a support and stimulus to business, industry and tourism.
- (c) Foster civic pride in the beauty and notable achievements of the past.
- (d) Enhance the visual and aesthetic character, diversity and interest of the Village.
- (e) Promote the use and preservation of historic sites, structures, landmarks and districts for the education and general welfare of the people of the Village with respect to the cultural, civic, architectural and historic heritage of the Village.

Sec. 15-7-2 Definitions.

For the purpose of this Chapter, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings respectively ascribed to them by this Section:

- (a) **Committee.** The Historic Preservation Committee created hereunder.
- (b) **Cultural Resources.** Any work of man or nature that is primarily of interest for its historical, archeological, natural scientific or aesthetic value, including, but not limited to, historic houses and other structures such as barns, schools, kilns, archeological sites, American Indian burial grounds and earthworks, buildings identified as the work of an architect, developer or master builder whose work has influenced the Village, and structures noteworthy because of their design, detail, materials or craftsmanship, or association with historic persons or events.
- (c) **Historic District.** An area of the Village which contains one (1) or more designated sites, structures or landmarks. The historic district's boundaries shall be shown on the Village zoning map.
- (d) **Historic Site.** Any area, place, structure, land or other object which has been duly designated by the Village Board; this includes prehistoric aboriginal sites.
- (e) **Landmark.** A natural or man-made feature of local or regional interest which is associated with a particular historic or prehistoric event.
- (f) **Structure.** Any man-made building which has special character, historic interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the Village.

Sec. 15-7-3 Powers and Duties of Historic Preservation Committee; Procedure for Designation of Sites, Structures, Landmarks and Districts.

- (a) **Composition.**
 - (1) The Village Board shall establish a five (5) member Historic Preservation Committee vested with the authority and responsibility to propose action to safeguard and preserve the historic heritage of the Village. In this role, the Historic Preservation Committee will act in an advisory capacity to the Village Board in all matters concerning properties which are designated as historical sites, structures, landmarks and districts within the Village. In the alternative, the duties of the Committee may be delegated to a standing committee of the Village Board.
 - (2) Members of the Historical Preservation Committee shall be chosen and appointed with consideration of one (1) or more of the following qualities:
 - a. Active interest in the historic preservation of the Village of Merrillan.
 - b. Knowledge of the history of the Village and its environs.
 - c. Expertise and knowledge concerning architecture and archeology.
 - d. Ability to utilize authoritative resources concerning historic preservation.
 - (3) The initial five (5) member committee shall be appointed to serve terms as follows: position number one (1), one (1) year; position number two (2), two (2) years; position number three (3), three (3) years; position number four (4), four (4) years;

- and, position number five (5), five (5) years. As each term expires, a new appointment or reappointment shall be made by the Village Board for a term of five (5) years. The Historic Preservation Committee shall furnish recommendations to the Village Board for consideration for new appointments.
- (4) The Historic Preservation Committee shall elect a chairperson to serve a one (1) year term. This chairperson may be reelected or a new chairperson may be elected annually.
 - (5) The Historic Preservation Committee shall hold regular meetings six (6) times annually. Additional meetings shall be held as needed to perform the duties of the Committee. A quorum shall consist of three (3) members.
 - (6) The Village Board and Building Inspector shall be fully informed of the decisions and recommendations of the Historic Preservation Committee in order to distinguish and expedite actions to promote and safeguard the Village's program of historic preservation.
- (b) **Inventory of Cultural Resources.** The Village Board shall direct and empower the Historic Preservation Committee to establish and maintain a continuing inventory of cultural resources in the Village for consideration for placement on the historic register of the Village. Historic sites, structures, landmarks and districts shall be chosen for their eligibility as described under Section 15-7-4 below.
 - (c) **Nomination of Properties.** Property nominated by the Historic Preservation Committee to be designated as a historic site, structure, landmark or part of a district shall require a public hearing under the direction of the Village Board. Notice of the public hearing shall be published and also mailed to the owners of the property proposed.
 - (d) **Notice to Owners.** The Historic Preservation Committee shall provide full information to the property owners of the civic advantages and responsibilities involved in accepting such designation. Approval of the property owners shall be obtained a prerequisite to official designation.
 - (e) **Restrictive Covenant.** The owner of any historic site or structure may, at any time following such designation of this property, enter into a restrictive covenant on the subject property after negotiating with the Historic Preservation Committee. The Committee may assist the owner in preparing such covenant in the interest of preserving historic property. The owner shall record such covenant in the County Register of Deeds office and shall notify the Village Assessor of such covenant and the conditions thereof.
 - (f) **Assistance With Other Registrations.** The Historic Preservation Committee shall provide encouragement, information and assistance to owners of Village designated historic properties who show interest in seeking nomination to the National Register of Historic Places through the State Historical Society.
 - (g) **Promotional Activities.** The Historic Preservation Committee shall promote interest in the community for designation of properties as historic sites, structures, landmarks or as part of a historic district, and assist property owners in submitting qualifications of their properties as historic sites for consideration of such designation.

- (h) **Subcommittees.** The Historic Preservation Committee shall have the power to appoint subcommittees from the community and enlist the aid of area historical societies and other organizations for assistance in promoting the policy of the Village in the interest of historic preservation.
- (i) **Funding.** As it deems advisable, the Historic Preservation Committee is empowered to solicit and receive funds for the purpose of preservation of landmarks of the Village. Funds for such purposes shall be placed in a special Village account.

Sec. 15-7-4 Criteria for Determining Eligibility.

In determining the eligibility of any area, site, place, building, structure or district within the Village as a historic landmark, the Historic Preservation Committee shall consider the following factors with respect to eligibility:

- (a) Its character, interest or value as a part of the history or cultural heritage of the Village, State or United States.
- (b) Its association with the persons or events which have made a significant contribution to the cultural heritage.
- (c) Its potential to yield information important in history or prehistory.
- (d) Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or style, or element of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship.
- (e) Its unique location or singular physical appearance representing an established and familiar feature of a neighborhood or community of the Village.

Sec. 15-7-5 Register of Historic Sites, Structures, Landmarks and Districts.

The Village of Merrilan shall maintain a register of historic sites, structures, landmarks and districts.

Sec. 15-7-6 External Alteration of Designated Property.

The owner of designated property shall report any planned external alteration, including demolition, to the respective property to the Historic Preservation Committee for review and recommendation. The Historic Preservation Committee will base its recommendation according to the guidelines set forth in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.

Sec. 15-7-7 Transfer of Historically Designated Property.

- (a) The Village Assessor shall notify the Historic Preservation Committee when the ownership of any historically designated property is transferred.

- (b) The Historic Preservation Committee shall inform the new owner of the importance of their property and their responsibilities under this Section.

Sec. 15-7-8 Review of Permits.

- (a) Notification of every application for building, zoning or demolition permits for properties on the Village register shall be given by the Village Building Inspector or his/her designee to the Historic Preservation Committee for their review. The Committee shall make a recommendation to the Village Board concerning the proposed permit.
- (b) Considering that time is of the essence, the Historic Preservation Committee shall act promptly in its consideration of an application for building, zoning or demolition permits in relation to designated properties. The review and recommendation shall be forwarded to the Village Board within thirty (30) days. The Village Board, will vote to decide if the permit will be issued or denied.
- (c) The Village Board, in considering the recommendations of the Historic Preservation Committee, shall determine if the work to be performed adversely affects the designated historic property. In determining whether or not there is such an adverse affect, the Village Board shall consider the following factors:
- (1) Whether the work will significantly alter the appearance of the building or structure so as to remove features which distinguish the historic site, structure, landmark or district as a significant cultural resource.
 - (2) Whether the use of the property will destroy, disturb or endanger a known or suspected archeological feature.
- (d) The Historic Preservation Committee may also recommend to the Village Board variations which are comparable to the proposed changes if the Village Board determines that such variations are necessary to alleviate financial hardship placed upon the owner of the property. The Historic Preservation Committee will be allowed another thirty (30) days to determine such variations. The Committee's recommendation shall be considered by the Village Board before a vote is taken to determine if a building, zoning or demolition permit will be issued.
- (e) Nothing contained in this Section shall prohibit the construction, alteration or demolition of any improvement on a designated historic property, or in a historic district pursuant to any court judgment to remedy conditions determined to be dangerous to life, health or property. In such case, no approval from the Committee shall be required.

Sec. 15-7-9 Designation of Repository for Documents.

The Village of Merrilan Village Hall is designated as the repository for all studies, surveys, reports, programs and designations of all historic sites, structures, landmarks and districts.

