

# **NORTH MERIDIAN STREET PRESERVATION AREA DESIGN GUIDELINES**

prepared for  
**MERIDIAN STREET PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

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## **Introduction:**

## **Purpose of Commission and Guidelines**

The Meridian Street Preservation Commission was created in 1971 for the purpose of preserving and protecting a historic, scenic, and aesthetic portion of North Meridian Street and its surrounding area within the city of Indianapolis. The Meridian Street Preservation Commission seeks to preserve the unique character of this area by limiting and restricting any uses or changes that are unhealthful, unsafe, and unaesthetic (See Appendix A for IC 14-3-3.2-1).

The Meridian Street Preservation Area consists of a primary and secondary zone. The primary zone encompasses the portion of North Meridian Street that stretches between 40th Street and Westfield Boulevard, and within 100 feet east and west of the North Meridian Street right-of-way. This area is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and is also known as the North Meridian Street Historic District. Any variance of zoning, land use change, variance of development standards, or changes either through repair or replacement to any exterior features must be approved by the Commission. The secondary zone includes all land lying within 1,000 feet of the North Meridian Street right-of-way to the east and west, and any land within 750 feet of the north and south ends of the North Meridian Street Historic District area. This secondary zone is intended to act as a protective area and any variances of development standards within this zone must also be approved by the Meridian Street Preservation Commission (See Appendix A for IC 14-3-3.2-2, 14-3-3.2-23, and map)

When seeking approval from the Commission for a rezoning, variance, or change to a feature, an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness must be filed with any necessary plans, drawings, photos, material samples, or other supporting documentation. The Commission will then review the application and its specifics at its monthly public hearings and either deny or grant a Certificate of Appropriateness. The Commission meetings are open to the public, and any persons affected by a proposed change will be notified.

Certificate of Appropriateness applications are available from the Department of Metropolitan Development, 200 E. Washington Street, Suite 1860, Indianapolis, IN, 46204.

Many historic district Commissions adopt design guidelines to facilitate the administration of the design review process in their districts. Design Guidelines are developed by translating into words the principles, relationships, and features which define an area's character. By researching the natural and built elements of a district, the individual resources and needs of that district can be integrated into more uniform standards. Guidelines are established with input from the residents of the area and the Commission members, many of whom are also residents.

These design guidelines were created to assure a relative consistency of decision making not only for the residents of the affected area, but also for the Commission itself. Procedures such as these afford due process and attempt to minimize the subjective aspects of design review by relying upon accepted guidelines that all concerned parties can understand and comply with.

Each project has its own set of goals, constraints, and impacts, therefore, the contents of these standards not as absolute rules, but instead as guidelines for all involved. When reviewing a proposal, Commissioners rely on established guidelines as well as other pertinent decision making factors such as:

- to what extent does the proposed change call attention to itself?
- does the change contribute to , or detract from, the overall character of the district?
- are there reasonable alternatives?
- is it architecturally and stylistically appropriate or complimentary to the districts character?
- what can be seen from the neighboring properties, streets, alleys, or sidewalks?
- is any damage likely to affect the long term physical condition of a structure, property, or surroundings??