

URBAN PLANNING SERVICES

WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA



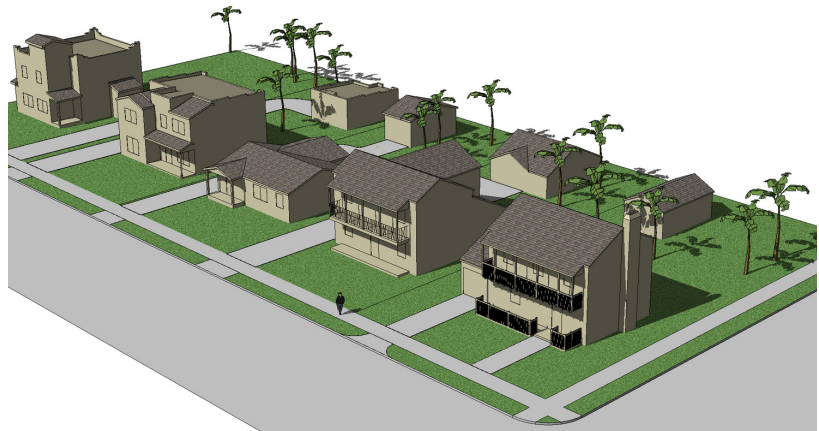
Building Mass and Scale in Historic Districts

The City of West Palm Beach is positioned between the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and the vast Everglades wilderness. Rapid growth has pushed the region of 99,900 to a turning point. Developable land is now scarce, greatly increasing the demand for infill development. As a result, redevelopment pressure is rising in many of West Palm Beach's fourteen residential historic districts.

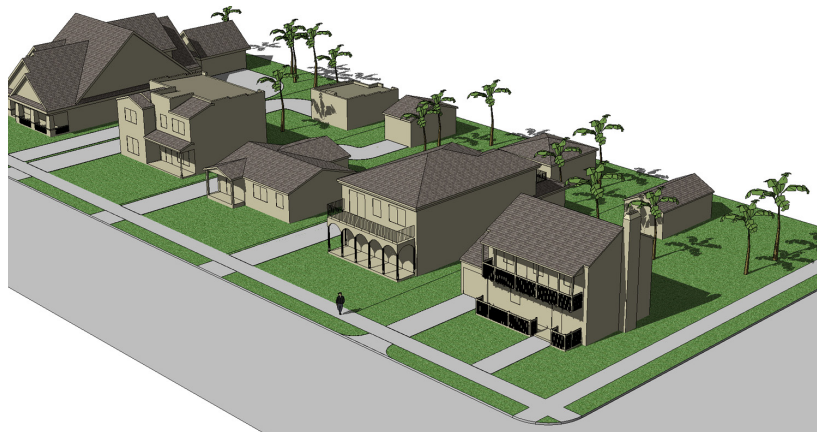


A consultant team led by Winter & Company assisted the City of West Palm Beach with tools to protect the character of its historic districts. The City and consultant team developed context sensitive dimensional standards and improved guidelines to ensure that new infill and additions are compatible with the surrounding design character.

Because traditional mass and scale varies greatly across West Palm Beach's fourteen historic districts, standards and guidelines need to be context sensitive.



Access to the Intracoastal Waterway is contributing to rising property values and development pressure in many of the city's historic districts.



In the first phase of the project, Winter & Company modeled infill trends in different contexts throughout historic districts in West Palm Beach. The models help identify potential issues occurring with new development.

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The process included active public participation in a series of community workshops. In these workshops, participants identified the character-defining features of the city's historic districts and current building issues that impact the character. Solutions were explored that balance preservation objectives with the needs of individual homeowners. While discussing solutions, it was important to consider:

- » Quality of life and sense of community currently enjoyed by residents
- » The ability of residents and private builders to invest and expand
- » Current trends in residential development
- » The effectiveness of current regulations
- » The simplicity and ease of use of any future regulations


The project's initial assessment phase set the stage for a strategy to select the appropriate regulatory tools to address building scale and preliminary recommendations. After establishing the strategy, Winter & Company developed and presented tools to address mass and scale throughout historic districts in West Palm Beach.

The regulations were adopted in April 2010.

West Palm Beach, FL • Preservation in Historic Districts Public Workshop #1 • April 26, 2007

Defining District Character: Old Northwood

The Old Northwood Historic District is generally bounded by 35th Street to the north, 26th Street to the south, the alley east of Broadway to the west and the North Dixie Highway to the east. The district is primarily made up of one- and two-story Mediterranean Revival and Mission Revival homes built during the 1920's and 1930's Florida Land Boom. Additional Post-War construction has introduced diverse styles into the district.



The character of existing historic resources should inform rehabilitation and new construction in the city's historic districts. Use this worksheet to describe any defining features that you can identify at the block, site and building level within the Old Northwood Historic District.

1. Block Features seen at the block level can include street pattern, street width, the presence or lack of alleys, street trees, building setback patterns and other features.

Several alleys with both single and 2 story abundance - Street pattern both single, 2 story and a few 3-story buildings

2. Site Features at the site level can include front and side setbacks, building position, lot coverage or amount of open space, landscaping and parking arrangements.

Most are front and side setbacks, some using maximum coverage, others having various amounts of open space.

Winter & Company used interactive workshop exercises to encourage community involvement.

SERVICES:

- » Mass and scale studies in the city's fourteen historic districts
- » Community workshops
- » Citizen, realtor and construction industry focus groups
- » Context sensitive standards and guidelines for mass and scale

CLIENT:

Friederike Mittner
Historic Preservation Department
City of West Palm Beach

DATE:

2007-2010



The community participated in the planning process through a series of public workshops.



West Palm Beach is seeking to protect its unique architectural heritage.

