If you live or work in the Downtown Historic District, you may know the Guidelines as the rules that tell you what sort of replacement windows to buy. If you have ever admired the way the Historic Downtown looks, you may not know that the Historic District Guidelines have had a lot to do with preserving the charm of the neighborhood.

The Guidelines, which have been in place since 1990 and are now being updated, ensure that existing homes and commercial structures in the Historic Overlay District (HOD) are protected against deterioration, and that their historical or architectural character is preserved. Those who own homes or businesses in the HOD and plan to make exterior changes or improvements to their buildings— not just basic maintenance—need to have those changes reviewed by the Architectural Review Board (ARB), made up of citizen volunteers appointed by City Council.

How did the Guidelines get established? As area suburbs grew in the 1980s, a group of residents and business owners recognized how special the buildings in the HOD were and wanted to protect them. In 1988, their efforts paid off as the Manassas Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Historic District Guidelines that followed were written to protect the historic designation and were based on the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Through the years the original 141-page Guidelines were supplemented with more guidance on metal roofs, siding, signage and more, but they were still not up to date.

The extensive update of the Guidelines now underway addresses changes in materials, accessibility, green sustainability and new technologies that couldn’t be imagined in 1990. “The new Guidelines are organized in a user-friendly format that encourages easy access to relevant information,” Development Services/Historic District Planner Dorothy Baker explains. “The Guidelines will be divided into two separate books: one for commercial and institutional buildings, and one for residential buildings. There are a multitude of graphics, tables with example materials and design elements, and an easy to use online version.”

How does all of that information come together? “Throughout the years, staff has been keeping track of the most common questions and concerns from the public about the Guidelines. The ARB has also pointed out gaps, missing information, and necessary changes that have been addressed in the updated version. As for historic preservation technical guidance, the gold standard is the National Park Service’s Preservation Briefs, a starting point for localities across the country,” Baker says. The ARB is expected to adopt the guidelines this summer.

The community will also have a chance to comment on the proposed updates. The draft Guidelines are posted at www.manassasva.gov/hod where you can provide feedback beginning on February 18, at the start of the 60-day public comment period. If you have questions, suggestions or thoughts, you may contact staff by calling 703-257-8223; emailing arb@manassasva.gov; mailing feedback to 9800 Godwin Dr., Manassas VA 20110; or visiting an Open House hosted by the ARB and staff in late March to provide feedback.

The updated Guidelines not only look to the past, but look to the future. “The HOD also ensures future development takes historic buildings into consideration, allowing new construction to add vibrancy to Old Town while keeping the City’s history relevant,” Baker observes. “Overall, the value of the HOD lies in the identity of Old Town, and what it means to be a part of the community. This helps enhance businesses, and promotes tourism to community members and visitors alike. Most importantly and sometimes hardest to quantify, is the value the HOD offers in providing a sense of place and community, and in fostering civic pride.”
A Moment with the Mayor

Mayor Michelle Davis-Younger

It is February, also known as the month of LOVE, and I continue to LOVE representing you as Mayor of the best city on earth…Manassas. As I enter the second year of my term, I remain thankful and plan to continue to keep Manassas the desired place to be! The City has so many wonderful events planned this year, and we are happy to plan celebrations for our 150th anniversary as a City in 2023. We are also excited about renovating City Hall to provide better service for our residents.

I don’t know if you all believe in resolutions, but I have resolved to be kinder and more patient…especially with those who don’t think like me. I think if we all hear everyone out and really listen to understand and not just to hear, our community will certainly be a better place for it. Please continue to watch out for one another, especially the senior residents in our community. With the winter weather being a bit of a challenge, be sure to check on your neighbors. Also continue to follow CDC guidelines regarding COVID, as it seems as if this virus will be with us for a while. Just like anything else that challenges us, we will rise to the occasion and conquer it!

The year started off a little bittersweet when we lost one of our own City employees, Ms. Monica Boehringer. Monica was the QUEEN of Refuse and Recycling for the City, gave us many years of dedicated service, made refuse and recycling fun, and taught us a lot. Always responsive and kind, she never had a harsh word to say. I spent a day with her shortly after I was elected Mayor to get a better understanding of what her job involved, and despite getting some pretty difficult emails and voice mails, she never responded negatively, but was always patient and lending a hand. She will be missed by many, and leaves behind a daughter, who I hope you will keep in your thoughts and prayers.

Remember, this is the LOVE month. Show some extra love to a stranger who may be visiting our city for the first time, and you just might convince them to move here…you never know! See you all next month…come on Spring!

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CITY OF MANASSAS RECYCLING RATE INCREASES TO 53.6%!

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) announced that the City of Manassas recycling rate in 2020 is 53.6%, the standard is 25%!

This increase comes from our residents participating in our annual RecycleFest! Thank you for your continued support!

The City’s goal for recycling is to maintain a recycling rate over 50%. We need YOUR help to keep the City of Manassas a recycle-friendly place!

MANASSAS.VA.GOV/RECYCLING
As we welcome February, I hope that you have been able to enjoy the winter weather since the first of the year. During this time, the City has been moving all of staff out of City Hall so that it can be reconfigured for better use of space to serve the community. If you need to conduct business with the City, you can find a list of where departments are located at www.manassasva.gov. The City Manager’s Office, along with the City Clerk, City Attorney and Economic Development, are now located in the Piedmont Building on the 4th floor. I thank everyone for your patience while we are working to renovate City Hall.

There were two private developments approved by Council last month that I would like to bring to your attention as they will be major projects in the City. The first is the Van Metre Homes project that will be built across from Georgetown South and the Grant Avenue Shopping Center along Grant Avenue through Brent Street and over to Main Street. There will be 233 residences with 10 single family detached homes, 97 single family townhomes and 126 multifamily back-to-back units. This is exciting news for our community and consistent with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan for this area.

This project includes designated green space for two parks within the project (Bartow Mews and Bartow Park) which will both be accessible to the public. In addition, Van Metre has donated 1.67 acres of property to the City adjacent to Baldwin Park which will remain a forested addition to the park. This project includes improvements to Grant Avenue and is a significant private investment in the Downtown “South” area. The development adds significant publicly available trails, including a trail along Grant Ave., a trail along Bartow St. connecting Grant Avenue to Main Street and a trail through the property connecting Bartow Street to Baldwin Park.

This project comes at the same time that improvements to this area are being made including a new Public Safety Building to be completed in early 2023 and the Grant Avenue Streetscape project. For more information on the Grant Avenue Streetscape project visit www.manassasva.gov/grantave.

The second project is a gas station/convenience store going in at 8704 Sudley Road. This is the first Wawa to be built in the City of Manassas corporate limits. This project allows for a 24-hour convenience store and gas station which will benefit the hospital’s employees and patients, along with thousands of visitors to the City. Imagine visiting a sick friend/family member in the hospital and now, having a place to drop in and get a snack or small goodie for that person. It will also increase jobs and add landscaping along the street with sidewalks and improved lighting.

Both the Van Metre and the Wawa projects will help the City’s efforts to improve commercial and residential corridors in our community. These projects had tremendous community input and changes were made to both proposals for the betterment of our community due to this input. City Council held thoughtful deliberation and discussion on the benefits and concerns related to these projects and decided that they would be beneficial to the community once completed. I am thankful for the way Council conducts these deliberations which has also been reiterated by many others in the community. It is not easy to be elected to serve and make these decisions, but we can be proud of the example set by the Manassas City Council.

W. Patrick Pate
The City of Manassas Happenings

Find these events and more in the City of Manassas, Virginia. For more information go to www.visitmanassas.org.

**Winter Market** is open - 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. at 9024 Prince William St. across from Baldwin Elementary School. There are 30 vendors at the Winter Market and more to come.

**100 Books Before College** program at the Prince William Public Libraries for students in grades 6 – 12 offers students a chance to earn prizes for reading. Visit pwcva.gov/100books or get a checklist from the library.

**Art, Dance, and Theatre** Workshops, Dinner theatre and more at the ARTfactory virginiaartfactory.org

Now - March - Ice Skating at the Harris Pavilion. For tickets or to rent the rink, visit www.harrispavilion.com.

Now - March 19 - Capricorn Planetary Alignment exhibit at the ARTfactory virginiaartfactory.org

Feb. 1 and 8 at 7 p.m. - Veterans and the Arts Initiative: Spring 2022 Guitar Workshop Series hyltoncenter.org

Feb. 4 from 6 - 9 p.m. - 8th Annual Souper Bowl - For $10, participants may visit the downtown shops that will be listed on a map and taste the soups, then vote for your favorite. www.visitmanassas.org

Feb. 12 at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. - **Virginia National Ballet** - The Beatles! Tango Nights; and For those we lost hyltoncenter.org

Feb. 13 at 3:30 - 6:30 p.m. - Valentine’s Sunday Dance @ ARTfactory

Feb. 19 at 8 p.m. - **Ballet Hispánico** hyltoncenter.org

Feb. 20 at 1 and 4 p.m. - **Popovich Comedy Pet Theater** hyltoncenter.org

Feb. 21 - President’s Day - All City offices are closed. Online services are always open: manassasva.gov/paymybill

March 1 from 7-7:30 p.m. – **Livestream Shopping with Historic Manassas** facebook.com/manassas

March 5 at 7:30 p.m. - **Manassas Symphony Orchestra: Amadeus!** hyltoncenter.org

March 11 - 13 - **Manassas Ballet Theatre’s Gaite Parisienne & More!** hyltoncenter.org

Mar 19 at 7:30 p.m. - **Manassas Chorale Voices United:** Wonder, Love and Praise Concert hyltoncenter.org

March 21 at 7 p.m. - **City Council Town Hall Meeting** location to be determined

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**Departments Move for City Hall Renovation**

City Hall’s renovation will make it easier for you to access services. For the next year or so, departments have been relocated:

**at the Customer Service Center**

9800 Godwin Drive

- Building & Zoning Permits
- Long-Range Planning
- Business Licenses
- Real Estate & Personal Property Taxes
- Tax Relief for the Elderly/Disabled/Disabled Veterans
- Tax Payments & Parking Permits

**at the Piedmont Building**

9324 West Street

- City Clerk
- City Manager & City Attorney
- Communications
- Economic Development
- Mayor & Council

**at Public Works**

8500 Public Works Dr.

- Human Resources

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**Get Social!**

Visit the City at www.manassasva.gov

www.facebook.com/cityofmanassas

www.twitter.com/cityofmanassas

www.flickr.com/photos/cityofmanassas

www.instagram.com/cityofmanassas

www.youtube.com/user/manassascityva

To contact the City of Manassas Connection newsletter, email pprince@manassasva.gov